# AVANT GARDE

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# AVANT GARDE®

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Gentlemen:

I'm on Death Row at San Quentin, and getting your magazine really chases the gloom around here—not only for me, but for all the guys here.

Carl A. Quicke
San Quentin Prison, Calif.

Dear Editors:

You boys have a lot of gall running those pictures of Betty Rambow's bare buttocks. One might almost say you have a lot of cheek!

Harvey Timmerman
Boise, Ida.

Gents:

Your "She Stoops to Conquer" pictures were nothing but cheap pandering to buttocks fetishists—of which I am proud to be one. Long live the feminine gluteus maximus and Avant-Garde!

Carl Prokos
Jacksonville, Fla.

Ed:

In view of "She Stoops...," perhaps a better name for your mag would be "Rear Guard."

Kent E. Chemetski
Micanopy, Fla.

Dear People,

My parents, with their closed minds, told me to leave home if I would not cancel my subscription to your lovely magazine. I refused, and left. So here I am, at 215 E. 37th St., in my own pad. I am a 20-year-old college student, and feel I am old enough to select what I choose to take into my mind. My mother can continue to be amused by Redbook and the rest of that shit. Pax et amor!

Sharron Carl
New York, N.Y.

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# THE DOCTOR WHO CALLED THE A.M.A. THE "AMERICAN MURDER ASSOCIATION"

BY WARNER BROWN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BENEDICT J. FERNANDEZ

The House of Delegates of the American Medical Association—sometimes known as the Protestant Mafia—was holding its 118th annual meeting in, appropriately enough, the Hotel Americana's Imperial Ballroom. July the Fourth had just passed, so the meeting itself was preceded by a colorful patriotic spectacle: The U.S. Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, decked out in 18th Century periwigs and tunics, tooting horns and thumping drums, gave a splendid, stirring history of America at war. Many of the doctors in the audience openly wept.

The 244 doctors—red-faced, plump, average age 59—could easily be distinguished from the 100 demonstrators seated in one corner of the ballroom. The demonstrators—medical students, interns, nurses, social workers, etc.—were generally young, slim, and pale; a few of them were even unkempt. Some didn't stand respectfully to attention when the Marines played the Star-Spangled Banner. Some hissed when a Marine began pontificating about "our nation's role as the guardian of the peace and freedom of mankind." And some were wearing buttons or carrying placards that bore such insults as THE A.M.A. NEEDS A HEART TRANSPLANT, OR CAUTION: THE A.M.A. MAY BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH, or TWO FOUR SIX EIGHT, LET US CHEAPLY MEDICATE.

A.M.A. President Walter C. Bornemeier formally opened the meeting, then introduced a band of visiting Cuban-doctors-in-exile and a band of South African-doctors-on-vacation. Meanwhile, one of the demonstrators, a six-foot, slender, clean-cut young man, began walking down the aisle to the stage. He was recognized as one of those who hadn't stood for the Star-Spangled Banner. As he walked, some doctors tried to trip him, others tried to kick him. The young man climbed onto the platform, grabbed hold of the microphone, and announced, "I hereby declare this meeting illegitimate, null and void." Dr. Bornemeier, not losing any of his aplomb, asked, "What do you want?" As an afterthought, he added, "Get out of here." "I want to talk about the A.M.A.," the young man replied. "How long?" "Two minutes." Dr. Bornemeier, still grappling for the microphone, managed to say into it, "This gentleman would like two minutes to speak about the A.M.A."

From the floor various physicians called:
"Get him off the stage!"
"Shut up!"
"Go to hell!"
"Get a haircut!"
"Go back to Russia, you Communist!"

One very excited doctor leaped upon the stage, *à la* John Wilkes Booth, and suggested, very seriously, "Let's kill the bastard!"

The young man was a little startled by this unfriendly reception, but he managed to take out a sheet of paper and launch into his speech. And with his first words, things really hit the fan.

"Let's get one thing straight," he shouted above the boos and the catcalls. "The American Medical Association is really the American Murder Association."

There were strangled cries of outrage, some doctors, white with anger, beat a hasty exit; one slugged a demonstrator with a heavy black book; another took careful aim and threw a large glass ashtray at the speaker, but missed.

And can you blame them? American doctors are the Prodigal Sons, the Chosen People of our society. Most come from rich families (else they couldn't afford medical school); soon after they begin practice, they begin leading the life of Louis the Fourteenth. As one educator has pointed out, "Medicine is the only profession where the element of competition comes only at the beginning." Oh, everybody says that doctors work 80 or 560 hours a week, but usually it isn't so: Doctors typically include on their worksheets the time they spend reading *Reader's Digest* and counting and recounting their money. Even their whopping salaries ($30,000 is supposed to be the average) are known to be underestimated. Everybody kowtows to them: fearful patients, apple-polishing nurses, drug retailmen who want to sell them a New, Improved variety of aspirin, traffic cops afraid to ticket their cars. Indeed, the late Dr. Alan Gregg used to quote the remark of a colleague that "a physician is so surrounded by frightened patients, adoring families, and obsequious nurses that he will not brook criticism by God or man." Heck, doctors have become so exalted that they won't even make house calls any more—you seek an audience with the pope, he doesn't seek one with *you*. Only Supreme Court justices have more prestige than doctors, and with the furtive departure of Abe Fortas and the shady advent of Clement Haynsworth, it'll be no time at all before doctors are No. 1. So you can imagine how these Fatted Calves, these high-paid well-respected small-town sachems felt when someone actually had the effrontery to call them, good grief, *murderers*.

As the effrontuous young man continued his speech he was joined on the platform by other demonstrators. Two more ashtrays were flung. One hit Harold Osborne, a Columbia medical student, and bruised his leg. "Where are the Marines?" one old doctor asked plaintively. "Bring back the Marines and kick them out!" Done with his speech, the young man set fire to his Student American Medical Association card and to his Blue Cross card (to dramatize the linkup between the two organizations). Then the other demonstrators began shouting, "Hip, hip, Hippocrates. Up with service. Down with fees!" Their foray over, their mission accomplished, the demonstrators left the stage, escorted by a cool, courteous A.M.A. P-R man, and adjourned to another room to hold a press conference. The bold young man who had called the A.M.A. the American Murder Association there identified himself as Richard Kunnes (Cue—ness), age 27, a third-year resident psychiatrist at the Albert Einstein Medical Center in the Bronx.

On July 14th, the next day, Dr. Kunnes woke up and found himself famous. His photograph and his inflammatory words appeared on the front pages of newspapers all over the country; on the editorial pages, he was being lynched. The *Charleston* (S.C.) *News & Courier* cleverly suggested that "Dr. Richard Kunnes exhibited symptoms indicating to a layman that he may need help." The *Chicago Tribune* cleverly observed, "How Dr. Kunnes and the rest of them think that their tactics will help medicine is a matter for fellow psychiatrists to examine." William F. Buckley Jr.'s *National Review* even accused Dr. Kunnes of being "gimlet-eyed." The *Reading Times*—published right next to Dr. Kunnes' home town of Mount Penn (pop. 2800), Pennsylvania—editorialized that Kunnes' "language may be dismissed as the Hitler technique of the 'big lie.'" Home Town Boy Goes Wrong.

Nonetheless, the newspapers reported what Dr. Kunnes had said and they spelled his name right, so he was eminently satisfied. So was the group he belongs to, the Medical Liberation Front, which includes a dozen or so smaller socially-conscious health organizations with memberships totaling about 25,000. Dr. Kunnes was chosen to enter the Lions' Den because he is an effective speaker, and because he is second only to Captain Howard Levy (the dermatologist who refused to teach Green Berets and who was then imprisoned) in being the best-known person within the movement. Ironically enough, Dr. Kunnes had stubbornly opposed the idea of invading the A.M.A. meeting. "It's like attacking the Ku Klux Klan," he had argued. When he saw the newspaper headlines, he forthrightly admitted his error.

In fact, Dr. Kunnes decided that, having attacked the Queen, he would now try to checkmate the King. The next morning, just like that, he telephoned an A.M.A. vice-president in charge of programming and asked for 10 minutes more to address the A.M.A.—during the installation of the new A.M.A. president that afternoon. Otherwise there would be a repetition of yesterday's Happening. The vice-president gulped, and in a piteous, pleading voice asked if Dr. Kunnes had some alternative offer he could make. Soft-hearted Dr. Kunnes suggested that the A.M.A. buy him 10 minutes of prime television time instead. The vice-president reluctantly agreed to let Dr. Kunnes talk to the A.M.A., but mentioned that he would have to check the matter out with the House of Delegates. When the House of Delegates met later, they voted No unanimously, and asked for police protection. It's an election year in New York City, so Deputy Mayor Timothy Costello arranged for droves of cops to be stationed outside and inside the Hotel Americana that afternoon checking people's identifications. An organist who resembled Dr. Kunnes was detained, but the young psychiatrist and his crowd never showed up. For one thing, Dr. Kunnes didn't want to see any heads broken; and for another, most of the demonstrators had gone to work that day and couldn't have come anyway.

***

From the foregoing, it seems plain that Dr. Richard Kunnes is a belligerent, hot-headed fellow with a generous endowment of sheer gall. And he may be a psychiatrist, but it seems he doesn't know enough about human nature to be aware that if you call a group of people murderers, they aren't going to listen dispassionately to whatever else you have to say. But almost any conclusion one springs to about Dr. Kunnes would be wrong. Even the photographs distorted him: He is not dark, but fair-skinned, freckled, and fair-haired. He does not need a haircut, and he dresses conservatively. His voice is low, his demeanor gentle, his attitude modest, his mood cheerful, his manner open, and his philosophy idealistic. He is not bellicose and emotional, but restrained, thoughtful, and self-analytical. In a three-hour conversation he did not once use an obscenity (unless you want to count "ego-trip," "ambience," or "viable"). Nor did he smoke pot or tipple. His only weakness of the flesh, in fact, seems to be a craving for Coca-Cola. Altogether he comes across as a very intelligent, very genial, very dedicated person. In short, Dr. Richard Kunnes, the man who called the A.M.A. the American Murder Association, is none other than young Dr. Kildare.

But would young Dr. Kildare say that the A.M.A. is guilty of murder? He would if he had the guts.

Back in the Depression, things were not all berries and cream for America's doctors. They made only about $3700 a year then (fairly good pickings in those days), so the A.M.A. decided to improve matters—simply by lowering the number of doctors available. This the A.M.A. could do because of its power over medical schools: If the A.M.A. doesn't cotton to the policies of a particular school, graduates of that school may not be able to get licenses. And this the A.M.A. did do by putting pressure on medical schools to lower the number of

admittances. It was all done in broad daylight.

In 1932, the A.M.A.'s Council on Medical Education concluded that "The present medical schools in the United States are producing more physicians than the country needs." In 1933, the Council obtained the "active support of the Association of Medical Colleges in bringing about a substantial reduction of their enrollment." By 1935, the Council was gleefully reporting that there was a decrease of 584 future doctors in freshmen classes throughout the country. "This is a most encouraging sign," the Council states, "and it is due to the efforts of the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association and the Association of American Medical Schools and the Federation of State Medical Boards." Rarely in history has there been so clear and spontaneous a confession of guilt. Since that time, the A.M.A. has opposed Federal aid to medical schools, Federal aid to medical students (until just this year), and any elimination of unnecessary requirements for graduation from medical school. And it has only been in the last few years that the A.M.A. has stopped insisting that the United States has no shortage of doctors.

It is because there are so few doctors around today that they can, and do, charge so much. And because of the stiff charges, poor people tend to avoid doctors like the plague—and doctors reciprocate. Not surprisingly, the poor in this country have the highest rates for arthritis, respiratory infections, skin diseases, most forms of cancer, and even heart ailments. But well-to-do Americans also get shafted because of the doctor shortage. For one thing, doctors are so busy that they have little time to prevent, only to attempt to cure. Few middle-class people consult doctors for advice about diet, exercise, or health in general; most go only when they have a serious ailment. And for any possibly minor illness, they wander over to the local drugstore to see what's on the shelves. (You'd be surprised at the number of people who have taken Tums for their heart attacks.) And for another thing, America's harried doctors don't have the time to properly examine the middle-class patients they do see. Dr. Caldwell B. Esselstyn, director of the Rip Van Winkle Clinic in Hudson, New York, puts it this way:

**Let us take the example of a man who comes to a doctor complaining of a cough. The doctor listens to his story, hands him a prescription for cough medicine or the medicine itself, more likely than not gives him some kind of antibiotic, and sends him on his way. The visit is short, and the patient has an 85 to 90 per cent chance of getting well. The odds are good, but the quality of medicine is bad because no one knows the diagnosis. This is symptomatic medicine—quick and highly productive on a fee-for-service piecework production line.**

But how else is a doctor to see 40 patients in just one afternoon?

The A.M.A. is guilty not only of keeping the doctor supply down; it has continually opposed humanitarian health programs for the people of this country. The A.M.A. has opposed Medicare (Edward Annis, former A.M.A. president, called it a step toward "the end of democratic government in this country") and health insurance of any kind (it once called its present ally, Blue Cross, "a half-baked scheme"). Social Security, free inoculations against diphtheria, smallpox, and polio, venereal-disease clinics, Red Cross blood banks, group medical practice, Federal grants for mother-and-children programs, the elimination of the means test for crippled children, and the extension of Social Security benefits to the disabled. It is because the A.M.A. has so long been the Devil's Advocate that about 60 countries provide benefits for someone with a permanent disability, and about 60 countries provide cash payments for someone with a temporary illness, and someone who is pregnant—and the United States is not one of them.

The United States is the richest country in the world, but mainly on account of the A.M.A. our country ranks

8th among the nations of the world in the ratio of doctors to population (Soviet Russia ranks above us);

22nd in longevity rates;

19th in infant-mortality rates;

1st in deaths from cardiovascular diseases and from diabetes.

Dr. Kunnes, if pressed, backtracks a bit and suggests that "American Murder Association" may be too strong and that American Manslaughter Association might be more accurate, because of the question of intent. But it is hard to believe that A.M.A. doctors did not know that people would die because of its opposition to venereal-disease clinics and free blood banks and free inoculations against dread diseases. It is also pretty well established that the A.M.A. soft-pedaled the cigarette-smoking issue because of a deal it made with the tobacco companies—the tobacco companies contributed handsomely to the anti-Medicare campaign.

But have *millions* of people died because of A.M.A. policies, as Dr. Kunnes charged? Well, let's look at individual diseases. One expert, quoted by Fred J. Cook in *The Plot Against the Patient*, maintains that 45,000 heart-attack victims could be saved every year if our hospitals were properly staffed. Selig Greenberg, in *The Troubled Calling*, reports that 90,000 people who die of cancer every year could have been saved. For just these two diseases, that's 135,000 a year—over a million in just 10 years. Greenberg also quotes a "prominent medical authority" as saying that "each year more people die of preventable diseases in this country than were lost in battle throughout all of World War II." In World War II, 290,000 Americans died. Finally, in September of 1948 Federal Security Administrator Oscar R. Ewing released a report to President Truman asserting that 325,000 lives were lost every year because of deficiencies in the nation's health-maintenance system. If we start from just 1940, that means that 9,750,000 people have died unnecessarily. And even if the A.M.A. is not wholly responsible for all 9,750,000 deaths—some people are afraid of going to doctors, there's a shortage of nurses, too, etc.—Dr. Kunnes is certainly right in holding the A.M.A. guilty of the deaths of millions of Americans.

With this as background, let us now listen to Dr. Kunnes' speech before the A.M.A.:

**Let's get one thing straight. The American Medical Association is really the American Murder Association. Through its collusion with the drug, insurance, and tobacco companies, it has fought (in most cases successfully) every piece of progressive health legislation to appear in Congress. It has perpetrated and perpetuated a dual system of health care—one for the rich and one for everybody else. This has resulted in the United States being ranked 22nd in longevity rates. That is, in 21 other countries of the world people live longer, and here in the United States they die sooner—7 to 10 to 20 years sooner. And that's murder, millions of murders—and that's genocide.**

**You're the criminals who, rather than developing a preventive health program, have prevented health programs.**

**You're the criminals who, rather than preserving and enhancing life, have profited from and invested in illness and death.**

**You're the criminals who, through your monopolistic, exclusionary, and racist practices, have created a vast shortage of health manpower, resulting in the needless deaths of countless millions.**

**You're the criminals who, on behalf of your private, profitable, entrepreneurial practice, have opposed a publicly accountable and accessible free system of health care. You have delivered your services on the basis of people's ability to pay and not on the basis of their health needs.**



**You are not a health profession but a death profession. Lest you forget, your license is a license to heal, not a license to kill. I think it should be made clear that while we are specifically indicting you today, you are not the only enemies of the people's health. The enemies and destroyers of health, aside from the American Murder Association, are the health corporate managers, the health systems, research and development companies, expansionistic and imperialistic urban medical centers, and hugely profit-taking drug and insurance companies. These are the groups and associations that wish to use illness as a marketable commodity, and that cannot commit themselves fully to equal, comprehensive, consumer-controlled health care for all.**

**Groups like you have controlled the cost and shape of American health care for your own personal benefit at the fatal cost of the American people. This control is illegitimate and will be resisted.**

**The people have been and will continue to sit in judgment of you. Their daily distresses and deaths are**

**the evidence. The verdict of the people is that you are guilty of murder, but the sentence rather than death will be life. While your organization is doomed to be smashed, its destruction will hopefully liberate the humane, life-giving and life-enhancing aspects of quality health care potentially available to all.**

**All power to the people.**

* * *

But did Dr. Kunnes have to tell *them* that? What kind of ploy is that for a psychiatrist? That was the first question I asked when Dr. Kunnes had seated himself in my office. He nodded and smiled, as if to acknowledge that it was a good question, then answered: "We weren't trying to communicate with the A.M.A. We were trying to communicate with people at large, to tell them what health care in this country is really like. We're not out to reform the A.M.A. We're out to reform the whole health system in this country." He put it another way, with a grin: "We didn't go there for a dialogue." When I asked him what he would do if he were suddenly elected president of the A.M.A., he answered, "Dissolve it."

As Dr. Kunnes sees it, the A.M.A. is about to give up the ghost anyway. Traditionally, the A.M.A. could turn doctors into puppets because A.M.A. membership means ease in getting malpractice insurance, ease in getting hospital privileges (essential for a specialist), and ease in getting referrals from other A.M.A. doctors. But with the growth of large medical centers in the big cities, Dr. Kunnes says, doctors don't have to worry about the A.M.A. anymore—there's a neutral zone. In fact, he says that today the A.M.A. roster includes only 50.6 per cent of all American doctors.

What's more, Dr. Kunnes doesn't think that the A.M.A. should be the principal target of reformers. Like Lincoln Steffens, he thinks that the real villain is not Adam with his weakness or the serpent with its temptation. The real villain is the apple. "The reason we have poor health care in this country," he says, "is that our health-care policies are an extension of our profit-making, capitalistic economy."

In fact, once upon a time the A.M.A. was on the side of the angels—50 years ago, the A.M.A. did a great job in upgrading the standards of our medical schools. What made the A.M.A. go wrong, what turned it from the path of righteousness? Dr. Kunnes acknowledges that the A.M.A. is largely a Protestant organization and that it is ruled by the Protestant ethic—those inspiring ideals of rugged individualism, self-reliance, hard work, and screw the poor. People are poor, in this view, because they *deserve* to be poor, and therefore they don't deserve good medical care. Let them die without medical help and thus ensure the survival of the fittest. As a former A.M.A. president succinctly put it, medical care is a privilege, not a right.

But the basic trouble with the A.M.A., in Dr. Kunnes' view, is that it just has too much power. Through its hold over Congress (its lobby is recognized as the strongest of all) and the President and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, through its control over medical schools and licensing boards and hospitals, it determines what America's health policies are and what they will be. "I am opposed to the idea of health professionals setting policy," Dr. Kunnes says. "The consumer should decide the country's medical policies and over-all priorities. The consumer should decide whether he wants Medicare or whether doctors should be paid by the government. Just as civilians theoretically determine over-all military objectives, patients should determine over-all medical policies. The only role that doctors should play is as technical consultants and as a union that watches out for doctors' interests, but a union with very limited power."

But what about the "sanctity" of the doctor-patient relationship? Former A.M.A. president Edward Annis, after all, once said that "There are only a few things which touch close to God, and the relationship between a doctor and his patient is one of them." Dr. Kunnes says he is all for the sanctity of the doctor-patient relationship...but only 50 per cent of all Americans *have* doctors; the doctor-patient relationship wouldn't be spoiled if people had the money to pay their doctor bills; and "As for having a choice of doctors, there are so few doctors around today that even wealthy people don't have much of a choice."

To meet the present medical emergency, what Dr. Kunnes wants to see is a "transfer of skills"—the training of paraprofessionals to take over where today's doctors stop. "Even if we had twice the number of doctors we have now," he says, "it still would not be enough. What we must do is create an army of paraprofessionals, people who have basic medical skills and can start treating the millions of Americans who at the present time don't get any medical attention. Much of a doctor's time is spent with his chronic patients—checking up on the diabetics and the people with heart conditions. Nurses could take over all that work very easily. The trouble, of course, is that doctors don't want any competition—there was a 10-year debate over whether nurses should even take

temperatures! And the solution is to see that doctors have no say in the matter."

But could a paraprofessional do that tricky, all-important initial diagnosis? "Diagnosing a patient isn't complicated at all," Dr. Kunnes answers, shaking his head paternally. "You've been taken in by the A.M.A.'s mystification process. It takes just two days to learn to do a physical examination. Even the four years of medical school could be curtailed to a mere six weeks—that's what a group of medical-school deans and professors concluded about 10 months ago. All the rest is nonessential, put there to keep down the number of people who can afford all that time in medical school."

When I asked Dr. Kunnes whom he wanted for President in 1972, I expected him to say Ted Kennedy or Ed Muskie. Instead, he answered "Eldridge Cleaver. And for Vice-President, Bobby Seale." And when I asked him who his mentor was, what physician he was trying to emulate, I thought he would say "Dr. Spock." Instead, he ruminated for a while, then answered, brightly, "Che Guevara." Dr. Spock he considers "someone who opposes the war without seeing that it is merely an extension of basic American policies."

Clearly, this very articulate, very engaging young man is a radical. A very radical radical. He believes that health care is a right, not a privilege, and that therefore health care should be provided free to every person living in the United States. Doctors should be paid by the government. Socialized medicine? "Well, yes," he admits thoughtfully, as if he had never construed it in those terms before, "but without the bureaucracy of socialized medicine." As he envisions it, small groups of people all over the country would organize and decide for themselves just what kind of health care they want—the government would have a watchdog role, prohibiting any racist practices, for instance. If one group wants fee-for-service, that's its privilege; if another wants group practice that charges nothing, that's all right, too. All this may sound pipedreamy, but similar arrangements—minus the decentralization and local autonomy—can be found in several leading countries whose inhabitants live longer than we Americans do.

Offhandedly I asked Dr. Kunnes, "Are you a Communist?" He reddened—out of embarrassment for the questioner, perhaps; was a magazine called Avant-Garde actually indulging in redbaiting?—and replied, "No. The Communist Party in this country is not working for a revolution here, it has no revolutionary goals. It doesn't even have a serious relationship with the working classes. As for the Soviet Union, well, that's some kind of state fascism they have there. But they certainly have made progress in the transferring of skills; they have some really competent doctors." In other words, he would not let himself be redbaited.

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Two weeks after the A.M.A. confrontation, and one day after he turned 28, Dr. Kunnes and other members of the Medical Liberation Front trekked down to New York Blue Cross headquarters at 28th and Lexington. Blue Cross, always voracious for money, had just petitioned to raise its insurance rates an average of 43 per cent. The demonstrators started pickeling outside, then moved into the building and tried to enter the elevators and go upstairs. Blue Cross officials, panicking, turned off the electricity, and scores of demonstrators —and Blue Cross workers— were trapped inside the elevators. Then the cops came and arrested everybody in sight. "They were really angry," Dr. Kunnes remembers, still showing surprise. "One of them even kicked me in the shin."

What the M.L.F. wanted was data about the rate increase. "It was more theatrics than anything else," Dr. Kunnes admits. "We weren't going to destroy files or hurt anybody. We just wanted to confront the president and ask him some questions. And we wanted to dramatize our point that health care should be available to everyone, while Blue Cross seems interested only in the money it can make."

A few days later, the State Insurance Commission was holding a mock public hearing on the Blue Cross application—a mock public hearing, because the State Insurance Commission and Blue Cross are engaged to be married. Blue Cross President J. Douglas Colman had begun to testify. Suddenly a pretty young lady handed him a note. Mr. Colman put down his microphone and took the piece of paper, which said "Your mother is calling," or perhaps "Go Go Mets." Meanwhile, you can guess who had hold of the microphone now. "I have an important announcement," said Dr. Kunnes, who writes good leads. Colman lunged for a notebook that Dr. Kunnes had picked up, missed, and fell to the floor. Dr. Kunnes magnanimously helped him up, then continued with his statement:

**These hearings are a fraud. The public will not be heard today. Blue Cross, in collusion with the State Insurance Commission and the medical-industrial complex, kills more people every day in New York than are killed in the war against the people of Vietnam. Blue Cross and other private insurance companies must be destroyed. Free health care is a right of all the people.**

**These hearings are not about health at all. Blue Cross doesn't care about health. Blue Cross only cares about money. Blue Cross was set up by the hospitals to be sure they got paid. What do they get paid with? Our money. What do we get for our money? Whatever Blue Cross and the voluntary hospitals together decide they're willing to give us. The people want health services, not a lot of mumbo-jumbo and behind-the-scenes collusion. Insurance is not a substitute for health care. Blue Cross is as illegitimate as these hearings.**

Dr. Kunnes went on to point out that Blue Cross pays only one-sixth of the costs of having a baby; that Blue Cross has done nothing to hold down the cost of hospitalization, which has gone up three times as fast as the cost of living; that Blue Cross, through its position on the Health and Hospital Planning Council, has vetoed the construction of more hospital beds —if there are fewer beds, fewer people can get into hospitals, and there are fewer people that Blue Cross has to pay; and that the trustees of Blue Cross are not accountable to the people they set policy for. He ended his speech with the declaration, "Blue Cross makes us sick!" Then Dr. Kunnes announced that he would read a list of people who had been victimized by New York Blue Cross, took out the Staten Island telephone directory, and plunged in. After a while, the young woman who had handed Colman the fake note—Maxine Kenney —took over. She was just getting through the Bakers when the cops swarmed in.

"These policemen were incredibly sympathetic as they took us down to the station," Dr. Kunnes recalls. "They kept complaining to us about the cost of Blue Cross. Down at headquarters we were handed over to the Red Squad, and one of *them* kept telling us how little Blue Cross had paid his wife when she gave birth.

"At first they were all set to charge us with criminal anarchy," Dr. Kunnes went on, "and then they found out that criminal anarchy can carry a life sentence." He chuckled. "So they reduced the charge to disorderly conduct." A court hearing was set for September 26, when the State Insurance Commission and Blue Cross learned through Dr. Kunnes' lawyer that the defense would launch an exhaustive critique of Blue Cross-State Insurance Commission collusion, the two groups pleaded for a postponement—to November 25—to mull the whole thing over.

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As a third-year psychiatrist at a prestigious hospital, Dr. Kunnes stands to have an enviable future. Collecting $30 to $40 an hour from his patients. The idolatry of the community. A month's vacation every year, searching for exotic new places to visit. A summer home on Cape Cod. Private schools and Ivy League colleges for his kids, when he has them. The security that comes from insurance against all of life's slings and arrows. Air-conditioned cars, sailboats and motorboats, movie cameras, custom-made stereo-sets, heated indoor and outdoor pools, color TV sets, the whole schmear.

So what's he doing rocking the yacht?

Even Dr. Kunnes isn't sure—he hasn't been psychoanalyzed, and doesn't plan to be. For one thing, he doesn't have the time. For another, after his residency is completed Dr. Kunnes doesn't plan to practice psychiatry. He's going to become a professional organizer.

There's little in his background to explain why he's doing the Gauguin bit, trading a fine career and a luxurious life for one spent in the ghettos amid angry police with the certainty of eventual jailings. He comes from a well-to-do family (his father is an optometrist) and from a well-to-do town (there are no slums in Mount Penn, Pa.). His parents are not Left-wingers, so he is not emulating them, nor are they Right-wingers, so he is not rebelling against them. Dr. Kunnes' younger sister works in Wall Street as a securities analyst.

He was, to be sure, a precocious child. He was in the 10th grade when he decided to go to medical school and become a psychiatrist. "I was very much interested in politics even then," he says, "and in my pseudosophistication I thought that psychiatry had all the answers, even to political and social phenomena."

At Mount Penn High School Dr. Kunnes was very active—class vice-president, newspaper reporter, and so on. From 1959 to 1962 he went to Johns Hopkins, majoring in political sociology. During his freshman year he almost flunked out because he was spending so much time in civil-rights work, but then he buckled down, graduated in three years, and in his third year ranked first in his class. From 1962 to 1966 he attended Temple Medical School, meanwhile joining Students for a Democratic Society and taking part in anti-war demonstrations. He spent one year of residency at the University of Kansas Medical Center, then went off to Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York, where he met the woman he married a few months ago (tall, blonde, shapely, and co-director of the occupational-therapy department) and where he was fired.

In a nutshell, it seems that Columbia was planning to put up a $40 million community mental-health center, with government assistance, and Dr. Kunnes organized residents of the area in an attempt to take it over. The struggle ended in a draw, the $40 million was put in escrow. Columbia was not exactly deliriously happy about this outcome, so Dr. Kunnes was discharged on the grounds that

1) he had an anti-psychiatry attitude,

2) he had conspired against the university and the medical department; and

3) he was guilty of poor professional behavior.

Charges (1) and (2) are, by and large, correct. Dr. Kunnes, while recognizing that psychiatrists are a teeny bit less authoritarian and a smidgen more progressive than other doctors, believes that they blindly ignore basic political and social realities—for instance, that much mental illness and character disturbance in our society are the result of our dog-eat-dog economic system. As for charge (2), yes, Dr. Kunnes did work against the university, though he did it out in the open. As for charge (3), poor professional behavior, he is as guilty of that as Father Groppi and Daniel Berrigan are.

Now, if Dr. Kunnes had been fired right then and there, he would not have gotten any credit for his residency at Columbia. "It would have knocked two years out of my life," he says. So his sidekicks moseyed up to Columbia bigwigs and threatened to take over the hospital unless (1) Dr. Kunnes were permitted to finish his second year, and (2) the department did not thwart him from getting a residency elsewhere. "Columbia agreed," Dr. Kunnes reports, "but only if I shut up during the remainder of my residency." It was a deal, and Columbia even helped Dr. Kunnes join the Albert Einstein Medical Center, which welcomed him with open arms. "Einstein is more 'liberal' than Columbia in that it permits free expression," Dr. Kunnes says. "But it is *also* opposed to community control." When he finishes his residency, Dr. Kunnes hopes to find a teaching job while he carries on his radical activities.

Well, did he have a warm relationship with his father, did that make him "egalitarian" rather than "authoritarian"? "No, I wouldn't say so," he replies. "I haven't had a very close relationship with my father. And I have a real Jewish mother. I just don't know why I got involved in the political process. I really don't know, and I've thought a lot about it. I might be rebelling against my parents—they *did* force me to take piano lessons." He laughs. "But millions of medical students rebel against their parents. It's true, though, that I've got real exhibitionist tendencies. Once I even thought seriously of becoming a movie actor. And I think that I originally looked at politics as some sort of spectacle and drama. Of course, it's also true that our medical problems are really political problems. *Anybody* who enters medicine because he wants to improve people's health should become politically involved—because the only way we are going to raise health standards in this country is by using political action to start a whole new health system."

My final question for Dr. Kunnes was, "When's the next big A.M.A. meeting?" He replied, instantaneously, "In 1970, in Chicago." I didn't have to ask whether he'd be there.

# THE MOST HATED MAN IN AMERICA

## TWENTY-FIVE CELEBRITIES NOMINATE THEIR CHOICES; YOU'LL BE AMAZED AT SOME OF THE NAMES ON THE LIST

A SYMPOSIUM EDITED BY LESLIE POCKELL

**Lyndon Baines Johnson, so inadequate in other respects, at least succeeded in uniting the country—against him. His forced abdication has, as one result, brought about a hate vacuum in the United States. There seems to be nobody left whom the country can rally against, nobody deserving of that awesome title, Most Hated Man in America. General Hershey, Joe McCarthy, Henry Luce, Dean Rusk, even Earl Warren—all gone, gone.**

**In a public-spirited mood, the editors of Avant-Garde have conducted a poll seeking nominations for the title Most Hated Man in America. We asked 25 noted Americans to send us their ballots, hoping that their choices and their comments would reveal something about the wrongs of American society. The replies we received are remarkable both for their diversity and for their imagination. Although Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, like Abou ben Adhem, lead the list, there were also serious nominations for the likes of Helen Hayes and Walter Cronkite. Two Americans who are dead were nominated. And a couple of our voters even suggested themselves.**

**The conclusion we must draw, however, is that nobody has really replaced Lyndon Johnson in the disaffections of the country. And as several of the celebrities suggest, the reason may be that the hateful giants of yesterday have been replaced by merely contemptible midgets.**

**John Cheever**
**novelist**

It's hard for me to answer your question, because I just go on hating John Foster Dulles. I'll never get over Dulles.

**Jack Newfield**
**political commentator**

After reluctantly dismissing George Meany, Norman Podhoretz, and Alan Burke, I must cast my vote for Richard Nixon. He does, after all, have the power; and he has used it to continue the war, slow down desegregation, build the ABM, indict the Chicago Eight, nominate Judge Haynsworth to the Supreme Court, and send Shirley Temple to the U.N. Nixon, in fact, is making me nostalgic for General Compone Johnson.

**Clinton Rossiter**
**political scientist**

I *refuse* to have hate in my heart. I can be irritated (by both Thurmond and Cleaver). I can be sorry (for both black apprentices and white craftsmen). I can have pity (both for Mr. Nixon, who presides over the nation, and for the nation that gets Mr. Nixon). Indeed, I can *almost* hate Wallace—but not quite. As for Mayor Daley, who's he? Just a stand-in for Leo Durocher, that's who.

**Maxwell Geismar**
**literary critic**

I predict that Richard Nixon, if he is not already, will end up by becoming the most hated man in America—if, among all the other things that he is stealing away from us and from the American democracy, he does not include the freedom of thought and speech in which to hate him.

I am beginning to regret Lyndon Johnson, which shows how our society can slip down from one level of degradation to another, in the small, vicious, slippery little acts that are being daily committed by the present administration.

In every field of communal activity, we are constantly being told one thing, while another, the reverse, and the evil thing, the cheap thing, the crooked thing, the cunning thing is being perpetrated. I mean such things as integration, civil rights, health and education, consumers' protection, etc., etc. In each of these areas there has been a steady erosion of the progress achieved up to and even under President Johnson.

I am not even mentioning the Vietnam War, which is the root cause of all the other evils steadily mounting in our society. I now wish that President Nixon will continue the war until he too is beaten by the people of that invincible, small, and suffering country—until he is beaten and dumped by the American people who have not yet understood the true nature of Richard Nixon. I desist from going further only from the fear of libel. Mark Twain would have continued.

**Melvin M. Belli**
**lawyer**

I think that J. Edgar Hoover is probably the biggest hypocrite around today, but he's got so much on everybody that nobody dares criticize him. So we can't really call him the most hated American. Jackie Kennedy is fast accelerating her descent from her pedestal and may soon become a candidate. And I've represented a lot of hoods who, to me, were a lot more social and honest than this guy whom society editors love to call "Art."

My candidate, however, is Herr—cover the breast—Ronald Reagan!

**Herbie Mann**
**jazz musician**

Ronald Reagan. By his action and words since becoming Governor, it seems that the role he really wanted to play all along was the Great Dictator.

**Andy Warhol**
**artist and filmmaker**

The man I hate most is Christine Jorgensen, for not sticking to his guns.

**Ned Rorem**
**composer**

Miss Helen Hayes. Because, through her sophomoric portrayals representing class to the masses who accept her imposture as First Lady of Our Theater, she debases the already low standards of American culture.

**Madalyn Murray O'Hair**
**freethinker**

Poor old Daley emerged quickly and subsided into the folds of love of his adoring appointed officials. J. Edgar Hoover's balls dried up ten years ago. George Wallace, that cocky little bastard, won't strut but once every four years now. Strom Thurmond is a national joke and evokes more laughter than hate. Senator Dirksen did the world a favor and died. Roy Cohn is a sneak exposed.

To be hated, one must have enough on the ball to stir up the hatred. Hate? Hell, I can't even work up enough emotion to have a strong dislike for Tricky Dickie. Disgust is the word, man, just disgust.

From one who knows what hatred really is!

**Richard Armour**
**writer and poet**

The most hated man in America is probably the man who most intensely and most publicly hates the most Americans. It may not be a man at all. It may be a woman, perhaps Madalyn Murray O'Hair. What causes her to be hated is not her advocacy of atheism so much as her sense of superiority, her all-round nastiness toward those who disagree. Disagreeable people, I suppose, are people who disagree with us disagreeably. But hate is a strong word. Dislike is about as far as I go.

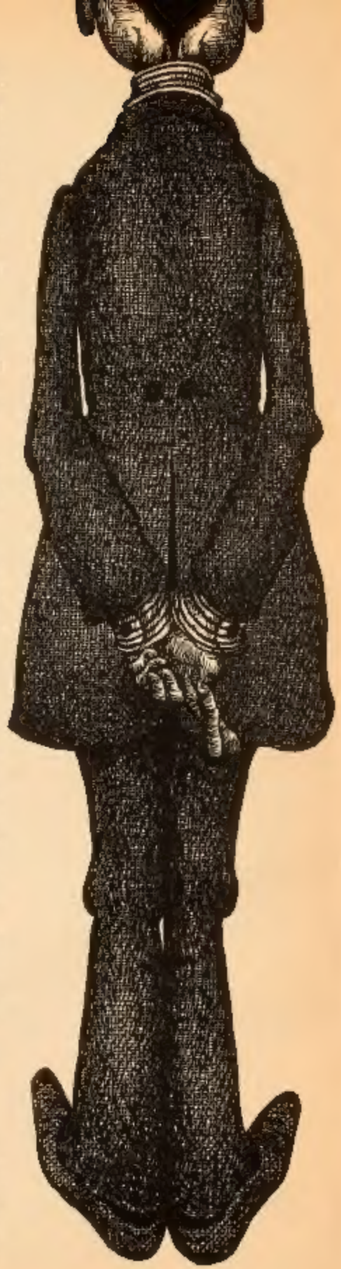


ILLUSTRATION BY RICK SCHREITER

**Mark Harris**
**novelist**

A truly despicable man is intelligent enough to know the terrible thing he is doing. I question therefore the true despicability of such a man as, say, J. Edgar Hoover. His is a low level of despicability.

To my mind, a higher level of despicability, and therefore a worse man in every way, is Walter Cronkite. He knows better. He manipulates the news to entertain, while pretending to be telling us the news. This is not to say that Cronkite is as truly despicable as Eric Sevareid, who, being smarter than Cronkite, knows better his own sinfulness.

The fact is that in the guise of news these men are selling something to please us. They know better. But they persist. They are doing the job for the company that owns them, and all that with an air of objectivity, calmness, and detachment.

Cronkite's discomfort occasionally shows through. Once he went up in a military airplane on a flight in Vietnam. The plane dropped bombs on people and killed them. Cronkite by every effort avoided mentioning that action. He spoke only of the technical features of that fine plane. Sevareid would have had better sense than to appear in such a role.

From the beginning of the war Cronkite has spoken of our "advisers" and of our "allies." In a large sense it has been Cronkite's war—rather a despicable act, I'd say. He is the world's worst man.

**Jean-Claude van Itallie**
**playwright** *(America, Hurrah)*

I suggest Walt Disney. Perhaps, as he is dead, it is the ghost of Walt Disney we ought to hate—a great technicolor ghost straddling the American continent.

Why hate him? For fostering illusions in us that he couldn't come through on—all those promises made to us by Donald Duck when we were children, popular songs, and all that conspired to make us believe that we lived in the best of all possible worlds. And on all those false promises Walt Disney made $350,000,000, and a good many of these dollars went toward the election of Richard Nixon to the White House. And after Nixon was elected, a Walt Disney stamp came out, in honor of the rich ghost who promised so much, and who, despite the fact that he is dead, is still making money and promises (with the revolting movies put out by the corporation that bears his name, and with all the other interests that a third of a billion dollars can buy). When Khrushchev came to America he went to Disneyland. He knew where it was at. But perhaps the most powerful reason for hating Disney is that some of his work, at least in the beginning (*Bambi*), was charming, and truly touching.

**Herbert Gold**
**novelist**

Eddie Fisher is the most under-hated man in America. People think they hate others, but actually Eddie Fisher is the man. It's Eddie Fisher all the way.

**Reinhold Niebuhr**
**theologian**

I would think that those responsible for the war are the most hated people.

**Kurt Vonnegut**
**novelist**

The cultivated Southern planter of 130 years ago.

**Harry Golden**
**writer**

Senator Eastland. Strom Thurmond actually believes that stuff, that Negroes' brains are smaller than whites'. But Jim Eastland is a highly sophisticated man; he's completely cynical about it all.

**Benjamin Epstein**
**director, Anti-Defamation League**

Probably the most hated man, by every indication I have seen, is Sirhan Sirhan, a man who committed a heinous crime, almost an unnatural act.

**Herman Kahn**
**author and head of the Hudson Institute**

People like Roy Cohn, Strom Thurmond, Mayor Daley don't have the stature to be hated. There's almost nobody of stature around today. There are very few heads of state who even have pretensions of greatness. There were giants in those days. Today...nothing. But if you had mentioned my name, you would probably have gotten some votes. Because I think I'm the only man of stature around today.

**Paul Goodman**
**author and lecturer**

Where you find hatred today is among the New Left militants, mostly whites—I find people like the Panthers don't share these feelings. And ironically the ones they hate are precisely the people who make the most sense, and who they once supported and now deviate from—people like Allen Ginsberg, Dr. Spock, and myself. When I go to a campus, I'm clearly the one the S.D.S. kids hate the most. They're tearing each other to pieces in order to preserve a shred of feeling that they mean something. They try to be holier than the pope and more militant than Mao.

I was at a meeting once where the whole campaign was to smash Spock. Of all people! Johnson's gone and now who do New Left militants turn on? Not Nixon, but Spock!

**William Bradford Huie**
**author**

Actually, Johnson was hated for other things besides the war. He was hated because he was from Texas, and because all the people who loved the Kennedys resented him. Now that the Kennedys have lost a great deal of their charisma, why, I guess that that doesn't operate anymore. No group of people has ever lost out as fast in the United States as the Kennedys. What with Jacqueline and Onassis, and Ted and the bridge, the Kennedys have certainly fallen fast.

Ted Kennedy is not so much hated as—well, Ted has always been a fathead; he's neither smart nor clever. The poor guy has gotten along the best way he could—he was even kicked out of Harvard for a year. Actually, Ted Kennedy was being used by an awful lot of people who wanted to get power and recognition for themselves. The way to do it was to use Kennedy, and they had no particular affection for him; just a bunch of goddamned opportunists trying to use him.

**Oscar Brand**
**folk-song singer and collector**

I have found such salesmen of their own souls as Everett Dirksen, Roy Cohn, and Joe McCarthy despicable, but I could never hate them. And I know that hate in America today is not focused upon one individual. The Klan hates Charles Evers, New England hates Aristotle Onassis, California hates students, and many Midwesterners are toxic anti-Texans. We have no single national identity, therefore we have no single object of hate.

**Malcolm Boyd**
**clergyman**

It's a bit old-hat, it seems to me, to point to Strom Thurmond, Boss Daley, Richard Nixon, J. Edgar Hoover (who is slightly more of an anachronism than Shirley Temple Black), or anyone else. Who keeps them in power? Who accepts their sad absurdities that so bitterly hurt the people? Who runs and hears it?

**Jacob K. Javits**
**U.S. Senator (R., N.Y.)**

What our nation needs is more love, not hate. In view of the hate-inspired tragedies of last year, Avant-Garde would be well-advised to pursue the cause of understanding and harmony among Americans—however "square" that may sound!

**George Gallup**
**public-opinion analyst**

It would make an interesting subject to poll someday, but frankly we haven't got a "most hated American." At least I can't think of one offhand. President Nixon isn't the one, of that I'm sure. The best index of where a President stands in public esteem is the number of stories told about him, dirty or otherwise. As a President goes down in popularity, the number of dirty stories about him increases. And when he gets near the bottom, they start telling them about his wife's family. And I haven't heard many about Nixon.

Even though there is no single person in America acting as a focus for hatred, this doesn't mean that the hatred is dissipating. Like a boil, it's in the bloodstream but hasn't yet found a point to break out. De Gaulle was an n.o.b. for a while, but he's gone, too. They're all gone now, all the great ones, replaced by colorless nonentities.

**Noam Chomsky**
**linguist and political activist**

I doubt that Lyndon Johnson was "almost universally despised," as Avant-Garde suggests. His Vietnam policies, and not these alone, qualify him as a war criminal, but hardly more so than his advisers and supporters, or those who abandoned the sinking ship not because they thought its course was wrong, but because they knew that the goal would not be achieved.

When barbaric policies are accepted by a passive citizenry and defended by a large majority of the politically articulate until the failure of these policies becomes evident, then it is clearly an evasion to vilify some individual, no matter how highly placed. The wrongs of American society, in your phrase, cannot be traced to a few despicable men, but to deep-seated factors of ideology and culture, to authoritarian social institutions, to the existence of centers of private power that are free from social control, to our willingness to tolerate racism, imperialism, exploitation, and forceful repression.

# THE VIRGIN FOREST

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS WEIR

# THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

## IT SAYS THAT AMERICA'S "WALL OF SEPARATION" BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE IS COMING DOWN

**BY WARREN BOROSON**

CARTOON FROM HARPER'S MAGAZINE SEPTEMBER 1873

T

ca ed "Communist-sym[illegible]" "John Birchers," "Know-Nothings" "bigots," and "Ku Klux Klanner" "vigilantes of intolerance" and "enemies of religion." Many good Americans rid icule them or shun their company. Almost every day of the year they get abusive letters and vile telephone calls, and six separate occasions one of them had to not fy the F B I that his l fe had been threatened. Just recent y, in Apri to be exact a government agency swooped down upon them and clipped the r wings to a genera chorus of hale ujahs.

These men are not guilty of murder or kidnapping or anything ke that. Their crime is that they have been trying to uphold a section of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the Un ted States of America the sec ion that states "Congress sha make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

The r names are Glenn L. Archer and C. Stanley Lowell, and they are the officers of an organization with a su premely sily name: Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State. The name is sily because it puts Jews off (they want to be up there with the Protestants, not buried with the "Other Americans"), a though some Jews are members. The name also fools people into thinking tha Catholics, too, are left out, a though there are Catholic members. The best that P.O.A.U.S.C.S. can do is use a shorter version of its name, namely Americans United. But by any other name, Americans United wouldn't sme any sweeter.

The trouble is that for 22 years Americans United has been fighting to keep Church and State separate, and in the process (has made bitter enemies al across the land. Americans United ha sued to keep ch urches and church school and hospi als from getting any public money; it has forced the Christian Bro hers to pay $400,000-a-year in taxes on the liquor they se , it has put many "captive schools" out of business (a cap ive school is a parochial school pretending to be a public schoo , but collecting pub c money); it has sued to keep gov ernment officials from se ling pub ic land to the churches for a song. Everyw here and anywhere in the U.S.A. there is an attempt to burrow beneath, bridge or break through the "wall of separation between Church and Sta e" (those are Thomas Jefferson's words). Americans United is on hand to give battle. For it was also Thomas Jefferson who said tha "to compel a man to furnish contribu tions of money for the propaga ion of opinions which he d ho ves is sinful and tyrannical."

The Interna. Revenue Service (now *there's* a euphemism for you), thanks to Americans United, is collecting revenue from a number of church businesses it ne er got before. You'd think that In e nal Revenue would be grateful, but it isn't. Fact is, there's been a lot of pressure on I R S. to do something about Americans United (it got Capone, why not Archer and Lowe ?) so in 1961 two I R S. agents dropped in on Americans United headquarters in Washington, D.C. hey warned Archer and Lowell that for Americans Un ted to retain its tax status (contr butions tax-deductible), it would have to never endorse po itical candidates and never try to influence legis lation. Americans Un ted had not done any of this before 1961 after 1961, i did, if possib e, even less of it. Bu apparently the pressure on the I R S was just too much.

Now prepare yourself for one of the most astonishing coincidences in the history of the world since the man Oedipus slew turned out to be his father and the woman he married turned out to be his mother.

A few weeks after I R S. went after Americans Un ted, it also went after the National Educat on Association. One night after the other Americans United and the National Education Association are the two foremost groups trying to prevent private schools from getting public aid. Go ly, what a coincidence.

*Church & State*, the official magazine of Americans United, had this De phic comment: "It does look like insanity. But we do not believe it is. We believe that the In erna. Revenue Service know exactly what it is doing."

We l et's be fair and give credit where credit is due. Although Interna Revenue is so very busy what with trying to get the big corporations and the wealthy to pay their proper share of taxes and what with investigating Justice Douglas's income taxes, it has seen fit to assume ano her vital, time-consuming function: thought-control.

### Catholics and the Wall

It's no secret that it was pressure from Catho ics that got to the I R S. just as it is no secret that most of the energies of Americans United are directed oward keeping Catholics away from the Wall. "Most Protestant and Jewish organizations don't want government money," says Lowell. "Protes ants and Jews are afraid that along with the money will come government control. Catholics, on he other hand, fee they can control the controllers. After all, Catholicism has a warm history of Church-State marriages and even today Spain, France, southern Ire and Italy, Portugal and severa South American c un tries have Catholic State Churches. Besides, Catholics may need government money more than Protestants and Jews do- they've got 14,000 par chial schools to keep up. Indeed, the ma n function of Americans Un ted eve [illegible] forma on in 1948 has been keeping public money away from pr vate schools.

And now the pot has boiled over. A ver the land parochial schools are withering away. Re[illegible] Parochial schools have always depended upon tea her-nuns and teacher-priests with their vows of pov erty to keep costs ow. But in recent years fewer and fewer people have been entering the Catholic clergy, so the pa chial schools have had to hire laymen and laymen demand decent wages. Some laymen at Catholic schools have even gone on strike for more money.

In 36 states, Catholic groups, often spearheaded by a Catholic pressure group Citizens for Educational Freedom, are bus y undermining the Wall. In a few states, they've already succeeded. Penn sy vania is giving $4.6 million to the parochial schools, Ohio is giving over $36 mil on, Connecticut has earmarked $6 million, and Rhode Island $375,000. The offic al excuse is that the money will pay the salaries of teachers who teach *secular* subjects, which is, of course, a big joke. *All* subjects in parochial schools are religious subjects. In his authoritative work, *Parochial School: A Sociological Study*, Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., writes:

> It is a commonplace observation that in the parochial school religion permeates the whole curriculum, and is not confined to a single half-hour period of the day.

Archer, Lowell and the other men and women who run Americans United think that it is wrong to force Jews, Protestants, and other non-Catholics to support a church in which they do not believe—a church that is against birth control, against therapeutic abortion, a church that is opposed to the separation of Church and State, a church that de-emphasizes the importance of civil liber ties. In fact, they believe it is unfair to force people to support their *own* church. Moreover, they point out that Federal aid to the churches would benefit Ca tholicism unfairly, because of all those parochial schools, 90 per cent of all the private schools in this country are paro ch al schools.

But what would happen if all those schools closed down and Catholic kids started inundating the public schools? won't our taxes go up? Americans United answers that once there is a fissure in the Wa , we will have a veritable flood. Once the government starts giving some money to parochial schools, it will eventually give lots and lots of money to parochial schools, and non-Catholics will wind up supporting two separate school systems. Because of the duplication of facilities it'd be cheaper just to support one larger school system—especially in view of the act that there'll always be Catholic schools, even if there are fewer of them. After a , Catholics *must* send their children to parochial schools unless they get official dispensation from a bishop (as John F. Kennedy did); that's what Canon 1374 says. So those priests who threaten to close down their parochial schools unless they get public money are either bluffing or they're lousy Catholics. It should also be noted that if more Cath olic parents had kids in public schools, the Federal government wouldn't have such a hard time funneling money to the public schools, and local school budgets wouldn't go down to defeat so often.

But aren't we undermining America by not seeing to it that Catholics get the best education possible? One answer to this is that our country prefers public schools to private schools. The public schools have served as America's melting pot, a place where rich and poor, Catholic, Protestant and Jew, Irish, Dutch

German, and Russian immigrants could rub elbows and get to know one another.

As for any possible decline in the standards of Catholic education the truth is that Catholic education just doesn't have much room to decline *in*. It's *always* been bad—which is one reason why less than half of all eligible Catholic students attend parochial schools. Catholics, and especially Catholic clergymen, are so other-worldly that they don't care much about human knowledge. As Catholic author Frank Getlein puts it in his contemporary classic, *"The Trouble With Catholics"*: "The priest-teacher...almost inevitably regards his prime function as the priesthood,... Basically, the average priest engaged in Catholic education doesn't really give much of a damn about education." The truth is that even when parochial schools have money to burn, the classes are overcrowded (typical size: 45 !) and the teachers undereducated. And even though Catholic schools screen out the troublemakers as well as the dumbest kids, Catholic students have never done as well in general academic competitions, as public-school students. Indeed, the wretchedness of Catholic education helps explain why a Catholic, Professor Thomas F. O'Dea, must admit that:

> The American Catholic group has failed to produce...both qualitatively and quantitatively an appropriate intellectual life. It has failed to evolve in this country a vital intellectual tradition displaying vigor and creativity in proportion to the numerical strength of American Catholics. It has also failed to produce intellectual and other national leaders in numbers appropriate to its size and resources.

And one final argument against helping Catholic schools is that, as Gerhardt Lenski reports in *The Religious Factor*, those Catholics who have a parochial-school education are less likely to support traditional American civil liberties than those Catholics who attend public schools.

## Is Americans United Anti-Catholic?

Even if pressed, however, neither Archer nor Lowell will say what they think about the quality of Catholic education. All they're interested in, they maintain, is the First Amendment. Catholic schools have the right to exist, though not at the public's expense.

Americans United, you see, is a very careful organization. It has to be. The day after it was formed, it seems, people started calling it anti-Catholic. Those against public aid to Catholic schools are anti-Catholic. Americans United is against public aid to Catholic schools ergo. ...By the same logic, of course, if you are in favor of forcing people to have blood transfusions when they need them, you're anti-Jehovah's Witnesses, if you're against the legalization of polygamy, you're anti-Mormon, if you're in favor of Sunday-closing laws, you're anti-Seventh-day Adventist.

But just to be fair, let's look at the case against Americans United.

The first charge. Although it was set up to uphold the Wall between Church and State in the United States, and that was its only purpose, it has gone beyond that. Americans United tends to criticize Catholicism generally. Issues of *Church & State* tell of the Catholic Church's interest in having Biafra secede from Nigeria ("Biafra...is the Vatican's most important foothold in Africa, just as Vietnam is its foothold in Asia"), the Catholic position on therapeutic abortion is criticized, a box entitled "Can't Lose" quotes a Catholic pastor as saying "All my life I've been obedient to the pope. If he's right, I'm right. And if he's wrong I'm still right. Obedience: that's what I've learned and the way I have lived."

Americans United can also, to an impartial Observer, sometimes go overboard. It strenuously opposes our sending an ambassador to the Vatican, because (1) that would single out Catholicism for special favor, other religious groups having no such ambassador, and (2) it would give an imprimatur to something that is the essence of the un-American idea of a Church-State union. Similar arguments are used against our recognizing China, and neither set of arguments holds much water.

And finally, sometimes *Church & State* can sound well, shrill. Here's one such quote: "When we deal with the Jesuits we are dealing with men steeped in a centuries-old tradition of deceit."

For the defense, one can say that most organizations go beyond their original purpose—and an organization providing a general criticism of Catholicism is much needed. In fact, Americans United can often be most informative. Did you know that there's a book by Father John D. Davis, *The Moral Obligations of Catholic Civil Judges*, which instructs Catholic judges to go easy on Catholics who refuse to pay taxes for the public schools? Did you know that four bishops, 120 monsignori, and 75 priests attended the pontifical requiem mass for the late, lamented Joseph McCarthy? Did you know that Catholics have been urged to run for positions on the Boards of Education of public schools, and from those positions work to get public money for private schools? Did you know that the reason the United States refused to send munitions to the Republican government during the Spanish Civil War was that Roosevelt, according to Harold Ickes, felt "that to raise the embargo would mean the loss of every Catholic vote next fall"?

As for the excesses of Americans United, the fact is that its officers are angry men, pushed by the unrelenting and often immoral way in which efforts are made to bypass the Wall between Church and State. Their anger shows in what they say and in what they write. They don't pussyfoot around.

Now it's the defense's turn.

*Item.* A few years ago, 22 Roman Catholic students in Moundsville, Virginia, were told they would not receive their high-school diplomas at a public ceremony—because they had refused to attend a baccalaureate sermon delivered by a Presbyterian minister in a Methodist Church. Americans United intervened on the students' behalf.

*Item.* In 1960, when John F. Kennedy was running for the Presidency, Americans United exposed as spurious an oath supposedly taken by entrants to the Knights of Columbus—an oath in which they promised to eliminate their enemies.

*Item.* Americans United has not hesitated to go after other religious groups that seek to undermine the Wall between Church and State. As one of many, many examples, in 1965 Americans United supported a lawsuit to prevent a public grant of $500,000 for new construction on the campus of Western Maryland College, a Methodist institution. Thenceforward, these Methodists stopped contributing to Americans United.

*Item.* Sometime before the 1960 election, Paul Blanshard, then special counsel for Americans United and also the recognized Scourge of Catholic Wrong-Doing, drew up a list of questions he felt any Catholic Presidential candidate should answer (e.g., how do you feel about public aid to parochial schools?). Thousands of people sent the list to Senator Kennedy, and his first response was to call the questions "somewhat insulting." Then Glenn Archer sent a letter directly to Senator Kennedy ("I personally have a great deal of admiration for you and I agree with you on many important national issues. I thought you were ill-advised to say what you did about our questions. We have no desire to infringe upon a man's religious beliefs but when a church takes one position and the tradition and law of a nation is another, it seems important to us to find out how important national characters feel about some of these matters....") Kennedy and Ted Sorensen thereupon met with Blanshard, and J.F.K. came out, publicly, for the separation of Church and State.

*Item.* Just 20 years ago, when Eleanor Roosevelt said she was opposed to Federal aid for private schools, Cardinal Spellman lashed into her for her "record of anti-Catholicism."

I think that that last piece of evidence would be enough to persuade any impartial jury to acquit Americans United of all charges of anti-Catholicism.

There is one more accusation that's often laid against Americans United that it's against *all* religions. The briefest possible rebuttal to this is the fact that Glenn Archer once almost became a missionary. And C. Stanley Lowell is a Methodist clergyman with a bachelor of divinity degree from the Yale Divinity School.

## The First Amendment

It was the *Everson* case, in which the Supreme Court permitted Ewing Township, New Jersey, to reimburse Catholic parents for the cost of busing their children to Catholic schools, that launched Americans United. The moving force was a man named Joseph M. Dawson, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Relations. In 1948 Dr. Dawson issued a manifesto calling for the creation of an organization to fight for the Separation of Church and State; a manifesto that was signed by a number of eminent Protestant theologians. The executive-directorship was accepted by Glenn Archer, then dean of the Washburn University Law School in Topeka, Kansas. Archer, a very bright fellow (he won all sorts of scholastic honors, and got the highest grades ever in the history of Washburn Law School), and a man who had held a number of important positions (dean at 19, of Greenville College, secretary to Kansas Governor Payne Ratner, officer of the National Education Association, public-relations director of the Kansas Teachers Association), had a great deal to recommend him, as did C. Stanley Lowell, a prodigious writer, who left the pulpit in Virginia to join Americans United in 1956. Both men are Methodists.

In its 22-year history, Americans United has done quite well for itself. It has won hundreds of decisions out of court, and hundreds of decisions out of court. Today it has 180,000 members, a staff of 40, and regional offices in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Atlanta, with metropolitan offices in Boston, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Seattle. Ever since its founding it's been in the black—a fact that Lowell attributes to Archer's being "something of a skin-flint," and which Archer attributes to his background in Kansas ("You had to learn to be parsimonious because three out of five years were dry and there were no crops"). Americans United has been doing so well that it plans to build its own office building in Washington—right now, its headquarters is a small, white, three-story apartment house on Massachusetts Avenue. The receptionist is an elderly but very pretty lady who turns out to be Archer's wife of 43 years.

Archer himself is a white-haired, florid-faced gent of 64 who looks like the movies' version of a Senator. Lowell is a tall, lean, cadaverous man of 58 who has a sly sense of humor that wages a losing battle against his air of gloom. If you ask a question of the two men, Lowell, sitting forward in his chair, is likely to answer first, and give a long, somewhat emotional reply; then Archer, leaning back in his chair, enters the conversation briefly, to add a vital point or make a pertinent clarification.

**Question.** The I.R.S. first warned Americans United about its tax exemption in 1961. Did the Kennedy administration have anything to do with that?

**Lowell.** I doubt it. This was a long time in coming, and we know that there was Catholic pressure: a man named Woodman in Cleveland kept making speeches and writing letters. We had a good relationship with President Kennedy. He admired us, and we admired him.

**Q.** Did you vote for President Kennedy?

**Lowell.** *He* [Archer] hasn't voted for a Democrat in his life. I voted for Nixon too. But Nixon had been my next-door neighbor, so I *had* to vote for him.

**Archer.** Paul Blanshard, while he was our counsel, voted for Kennedy.

**Q.** Since your organization favors having church businesses taxed, isn't it contradictory to complain when you yourselves are taxed?

**Archer.** We wouldn't mind having the tax exemption taken away, except that a lot of real offenders go scot free. The National Catholic Welfare Conference, which is just down the block, openly tries to influence legislation, and yet it remains tax-exempt. It's not fair.

**Q.** How much will the loss of tax exemption cost you?

**Archer.** We don't know yet. We'll know when we compare our contributions for this year with last year's. But I'm optimistic. Most of our supporters send us only a few dollars, so they won't be dissuaded. And our $500 contributors have told me that they'll support us, come hell or high water.

**Q.** Are you going to fight the I.R.S.'s decision?

**Lowell.** Definitely. Somebody who contributes to Americans United will sue!—

**Archer.** He can file suit in whatever state he lives in.

**Q.** I suggest North Carolina, that's only 4 per cent Catholic. What's your operating budget?

**Archer.** About $600,000.

**Lowell.** He can remember our budgets for every year in our history. He's got a fantastic memory.

**Q.** What's your favorite Catholic periodical: the *Brooklyn Tablet*?

**Lowell.** Oh no, not any more. The *Tablet* has gone liberal. And I miss it; it's like missing an old enemy.

**Q.** Have you ever been threatened?

**Lowell.** We every day we get nasty letters and phone calls. We used to pass them along to Glenn, but they upset him so now we screen what he gets.

**Archer.** I've had to call the F.B.I. six times because threats were made against me: there's a bomb in your room; that sort of thing. I own a lumber business in Densmore, Kansas, my home town, and a priest down there organized a boycott of my business. The same priest, when I went to a funeral of a friend there, used the occasion to publicly denounce me. I don't mind the criticism, the letters or even the phone calls, although I'm amazed how obscene some people's language can be. What can hurt is the ridicule.

**Q.** Why have you fought, against Federal grants to sectarian hospitals?

**Lowell.** Many of the sectarian hospitals practice discrimination. A Catholic hospital I know of won't let Jewish or Protestant religious services be held. And of course Catholic hospitals won't permit a therapeutic abortion. There was a recent case in New York, where a Presbyterian woman was dying in a Catholic hospital and a priest insisted on giving her last rites. The priest even claimed her body after she was dead, even though the woman had asked to have a Presbyterian funeral. We intervened, and succeeded in helping a Presbyterian pastor obtain the body.

**Q.** The New York papers must have played that down. Do you have any anti-Catholics in Americans United? Do you try to screen them out?

**Archer.** We probably have a few. It would be hard to keep them out, because we're a democratic organization. However, in the past we've sent their fees back to three members who had no understanding of what we stand for.

**Lowell.** They were *rabid*.

**Archer.** I hope you're running out of questions, young man. We've got a lot of work to do this afternoon.

**Q.** One last question. How is the fight going? Are the defenders of the Wall pushing back the enemy, or is the enemy ready to scale the Wall?

**Lowell.** Well, truthfully, we're a little discouraged. So many states are thinking of giving money directly to parochial schools, and as you know a few have already started it. The Johnson Administration really let out all stops as far as Church-State separation is concerned. The Johnson Administration was the worst ever. Yes, we've been losing quite a few battles.

**Archer.** But we haven't lost the war. We haven't lost the war.

## The Future of the Wall

The war may not be over, but the enemy is at the gates and a few of the partisans are raising the white flag. In 1961, according to the Gallup Poll, 57 per cent of Protestants and Jews were opposed to Federal aid to parochial schools; in 1963 only 44 per cent were opposed.

The decisive battle evidently came at Ecumenical Pass. Seduced by the siren call of ecumenicism, a number of Protestant groups began feeling that it just wasn't nice to offend Catholics with loose talk about the Wall, and from there they went on to think, Gosh and gee whiz, we could use a hunk of Federal money ourselves, come to think of it. In virtually every large Protestant group nowadays there are Fifth Columnists, and they talk not about Catholic schools but about what we can do with all that loot.

Meanwhile, more and more legislation is eroding the Wall: the Hill-Burton Act, the Defense Education Act, the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act. Politicians are simply more afraid of offending the Catholic groups than of offending the separationist groups: the former being better organized than the latter. Among those who have cynically gone over to the enemy are Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Senator Abraham Ribicoff. Of course, all along Congress has also had its quasi-official representatives of the Catholic Church among them Speaker John McCormack, Congressman John Rooney, Congressman James J. Delaney, and Congressman Hugh L. Carey.

As for Americans United: it's a fine old organization, energetic and impassioned, but the key adjective modifying it may be, alas, "old." Its members are generally well advanced in years, despite strenuous efforts to recruit the college generation. The young people of America are too angry about the draft, about the Vietnam War, about the ghettos and the cities, too interested in sex and drugs, and too disillusioned about America to have a strong inclination to protect something so quintessentially American as the First Amendment to the Constitution.

And so the Catholic churches will have their way, and there will be a renaissance of private schools—even the Hebrew school may make a comeback. And so the public-school system will decline because there will be fewer and fewer people who send their children there and who want to see the system improved. No longer will the majority of Americans meet on a common place and learn about the differences and the similarities between people. The fact is that a good Wall, as well as good fences, makes good neighbors. Indeed, according to Paul Blanshard, the religious neutrality of our public schools

> has made possible the spread of tolerance to other institutions in our society. Children who learn to live together in their formative years without religious distinctions are prepared as adults to build a more cooperative world.

Eventually, when the leak in the Wall becomes a flood, American society, no longer unified by the public-school system, may become as divisive and embittered as Northern Ireland. And Thomas Jefferson and George Washington and the other founders of our Republic will turn over in their graves while Cardinal Spellman laughs and laughs.

The handwriting is on the wall. It says that the Wall is coming down.

BY VINCENT CAMPBELL

**A LEADING SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGIST TELLS HOW OUR REPUBLIC CAN FINALLY BECOME A DEMOCRACY**

# DEMOCRACY BY TELEPHONE: AN ALTERNATIVE TO REVOLUTION

**Reading the newspaper over his morning coffee, an ordinary citizen scans the weekly list of legislation up for public vote. The first item he is interested in is a bill on smog control. The paper's brief summary of the bill—plus the yellowish haze outside the window—persuade him to vote Yes. He picks up the telephone and dials a special voting "area code," followed by his voter-identification number. He speaks into the telephone, a computer verifies his identity, and he hears a tone indicating that he can proceed to vote. He dials the code number of the smog-control bill, then a "1"—indicating a Yes vote. In a moment he hears a beep, which signals that his vote has been recorded. He votes on a few other issues, then hangs up the phone.**

The scene described at left is science fiction today, but in a few years it could well be the way the typical American citizen takes part in direct democracy. The mass media, the telephone, and the computer could put the important decisions of government directly into the hands of the electorate. From their own homes, voters could help set policy and legislate, as well as elect leaders. They could dial a vote at any time, at their own convenience, and without having to leave the house. For all the mechanical parts for converting our republic into a modern democracy have been manufactured. They need only be assembled.

We also have the means to quickly inform any citizen of political issues. On the back page of the newspaper, for example, each public issue up for vote might be listed—along with its dialing code number, and a brief summary of the pros and cons of the issue (written by elected representatives). After the summary there would be a notation telling the voter where he could get more detailed information on the issue—perhaps a phone number to dial, a TV program, magazine or newspaper articles.

By dialing a different telephone number, a voter could officially register his vote. Such "televotes" would be recorded and counted by computer, then the total votes "for" and "against" reported by the news media. The public televote on a minor issue might be limited to one week, but an enduring issue of major interest, such as Vietnam, could be voted on all year around. In this case, a voter would not be restricted to a single vote, the computer would allow everyone to cast a new vote each month, say, so that televotes would reflect current public feeling.

The mechanics of televoting would probably be understood readily by the average citizen. Without any pretense of scientific accuracy, television stations now conduct daily polls similar to televoting.

Televoting would be as simple as using most voting machines, and considerably more versatile. Instead of always voting Yes or No, voters could choose among many alternatives. Suppose a televoter were given a chance to help set policy on the war in Vietnam. The official alternatives offered him in the newspaper might be:

1. Escalate the war. 2. Continue policy of gradual withdrawal and negotiation. 3. Withdraw immediately. 4. (Other)

He could dial a 1, 2, or 3 to record his position. Or he could dial 4 and propose a new option by spelling it out, letter by letter, on the dial. Thus, after dialing 4 he might spell out "United Nations" on the dial, suggesting that the U.N. play a stronger role in ending the war. The computer would classify such suggestions by key words and tally the number of voters mentioning each key word.

But who would decide which policy issues are put before the public? Certainly the President and Congress, to guide their own actions, should be able to solicit a public vote on any issue. If the initiative were left entirely to our leaders, however, they might choose to avoid controversy by not submitting an issue for public vote, so, as a safeguard, there could be a requirement that any issue called to the government's attention by a certain number of citizens must be submitted to a public vote. (To bring up new issues, citizens could simply dial an "open issue" number.)

There are thousands of pressing problems that deserve immediate government action, but since the government can act on only a fraction of them, determining priorities is probably the most critical function of government. Yet no process is more closely tuned to public view than establishing priorities. And what televoting could do is provide an objective public record of the priorities of the people.

The public vote on the final version of any bill could be legally binding, or it could simply inform Congress and the President of public opinion. Shifting the power to approve legislation from Congress to the public would give the responsibility for government action to those who bear the consequences of it: the people. It would also give legislators more time to construct good alternative plans and policies for public vote, and more time to communicate their views to the public.

At the same time, there are practical reasons for letting legislators keep at least part of their voting power. First, those Congressmen who would have to amend the Constitution to provide for televoting might be less reluctant to give up some of their voting power than all of it. Second, legislation by elected representatives is such a hallowed American tradition that even the voting public might hesitate to part with it after 50 years of televoting. The public might, but not now. Finally, although legislators are often unduly influenced by pressure groups, they sometimes vote in the public interest on bills that draw very little public attention. The number of televotes on a bill to protect some obscure wilderness area, for example, might be so small that manufacturers who wanted to exploit the area could succeed by persuading a few thousand of their employees and investors to cast in votes. Public-spirited legislators could block this maneuver even if the electorate were asleep. A sensible way to divide the legislative vote between the public and the politician might be to give each legislator a number of votes equal to 10 per cent (or some other fixed proportion) of the registered voters in his constituency.

Through televoting, we could also upgrade the process of electing leaders. Televoting could in one fell swoop replace our archaic procedures with direct national primaries and elections by popular vote. The selection of candidates within a party is a process over which the ordinary citizen now has little control: he is typically given a one-shot choice very late in the game. How easy it would be to give televoters a choice among a wide variety of potential candidates, then gradually narrow the field in successive weeks on the basis of the voters' preferences! If this procedure had been used in 1968, both Republicans and Democrats would quite likely have produced different candidates for President.

The thought of telephone networks and computers linked together on a grand scale may conjure up the image of Big Brother peering over the voter's shoulder. But safeguards of secrecy and inviolability could easily be built into the televoting system. A person's identity can now be verified more accurately by computer analysis of his voice than by any inspection of his signature. An even simpler way to handle security would be to give each voter a secret identification number at the time he registers, a number which he would dial each time he voted by telephone.

It is an understatement to say that any system of direct democracy such as televoting would be difficult to put into effect. Serious resistance could be expected from powerful economic and political groups that exert covert influence on government officials. Lobbies, after all, would find it much harder to control the votes of a million citizens than to swing the votes of a few key legislators.

In deference to skeptics and opponents, and to give the country time to work out the bugs in the system, it might be wise for the first few years to let televotes be informative rather than official and binding. But any elected leader who acted contrary to the majority vote would surely be under strong pressure to justify his stand. As it is now, public sentiment often is a matter for speculation, and Congressional voting records are so poorly disseminated that a Congressman's stand on a given issue is unlikely to cause him trouble whatever he does. The University of Michigan's Survey Research Center once asked American voters a long series of questions and found "not more than a chemical trace" of detailed information about the policy stands of the candidates.

For generations the myth has prevailed in this nation that we already have democracy here. But being able to control government policies only by electing leaders, who may not act in accordance with our wishes, is a very low order of democracy. Even if an elected leader keeps his campaign promises, a large number of voters remain dissatisfied because he is likely to disagree on some issues even with those who voted for him.

Another part of the myth of American democracy is that good citizens participate fully in democracy by writing to their representatives, attending meetings of governing bodies, circulating petitions, and so on. There is also the implication that if you don't do these things you are a civic slob and deserve whatever bad government you are getting. No mention is made of the fact that if we really believed that our government should consult the people, we could make such consultations a thousand times easier for the citizen simply by using modern methods of communication.

Of course, many political and social scientists think it would be a mistake to make government more responsive to the masses. In the tradition of Plato and Edmund Burke, they think that leaders should represent the interest, not the will, of the majority. They believe that most people are not fit to govern, and that a well-chosen elite can manage the body politic better than it can manage itself. They contend that the masses are uninterested, uninformed, and easily duped, or that they are too emotional to govern with stability and reasoned deliberation.

These may be relevant human weaknesses, but it is not at all clear that the governors are less subject to them than the governed. Even if such traits *are* more characteristic of the common people, the reason may have more to do with their conditions of life than with their innate capacities. People who are scorned and poverty-stricken in a land of plenty understandably find it difficult to be patient and unemotional about it all. Nor can the fact that most poor people are not active in politics be held as evidence of their unfitness to participate. Like the rest of us, they place survival before politics. And even this is rapidly changing as disadvantaged groups learn that political power can put bread on the table. Unfortunately, lawful government has not served them well, and they have achieved their most striking political gains through protest, threat, and violence. A televoting system that gave everyone direct access to important government decisions might stay the mounting tide of disorder by distributing political power more evenly. It is the poor, usually, who don't have the time or means to travel to polling places. And a poor man's televote would count as much as a rich man's.

The main role of the citizen in a direct democracy would be to pass judgment. Let the politicians and their experts outline a plan to put a man on Mars, or a plan to achieve peace on Earth. But let the people decide whether they want to put the plan into effect or not, and which goal has priority. For when the people decide, we will be far closer to the ideal of having government of the people, for the people, and by the people.

# ISRAEL CAPTURED

## THE PASSION AND PURPOSE OF ITS PEOPLE ARE PRESERVED FOREVER IN A SET OF MEMORABLE PHOTOGRAPHS

It is key that he is y way tha Israe w ever be captured s rough he lens a camera And a gh hot of the world's most h ly creative photographers has done just that They have shot a series of photographs that preserve forever the triumphs and tribulations of everyday life in Israel The photographs, numbering 300 are collectively entitled Israel The Reality are currently on exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York They commemorate the 22nd anniversary of the United Nations mandate that created the State of Israel Assembled by the great photojournalist Dr Cornell Capa the pictures represent the work of 38 photographers including such famous as Arnold Newman Leonard Freed Ben Shahn and David Seymour at the last two months of the Arab Israeli war On the next 12 pages Avant Garde presents 16 pictures from the show Each one reflects the enduring inspiration of the people of this small nation one generation which has perhaps been most eloquently described by photographer Robert Capa whose pictures are among the most moving in the show Israel is the oldest and hardest place one can live in today It is also a place where the young sing at night and even the old speak of the future

TEL AVIV PHOTOGRAPHER LEONARD FREED

SENTINEL PHOTOGRAPHER

OTHER AND CHILD (PHOTOGRAPHER: PAUL SCHUTZER)

CHILDREN AND CARETAKER AT KIBBUTZ (PHOTOGRAPHER: MOSHE LAPIDOT)

FORELOCK OF CHILD SHORN AT ORTHODOX INITIATION RITE (PHOTOGRAPHER: KEN HEYMAN)

MORNING PRAYERS OF SOLDIERS INTERRUPTED BY APPROACHING EGYPTIAN PLANES (PHOTOGRAPHER: CORNELL CAPA)

ORTHODOX JEW KISSING RABBI'S BEARD AS SIG OF RESPECT (PHOTOGRAPHER: PAUL SCHUTZE

ISRAELI DOCTOR EXAMINING BEDOUIN CHILD (PHOTOGRAPHER: LEONARD FREED)

ARAB DANCING AT WEDDING PARTY (PHOTOGRAPHER: LEONARD FREED)

ARAB WOMAN (PHOTOGRAPHER: LEONARD FREED)

MOURNERS AT FUNERAL OF WATC[illegible] ORISTS (PHOTOGRAPHER: DAVID SEYMOUR)

K BB TZ WEDD NC NDER CANOPY S PPORTED BY
G NS AND PITCHFORKS PHOT GRAPHER DA SE MO R

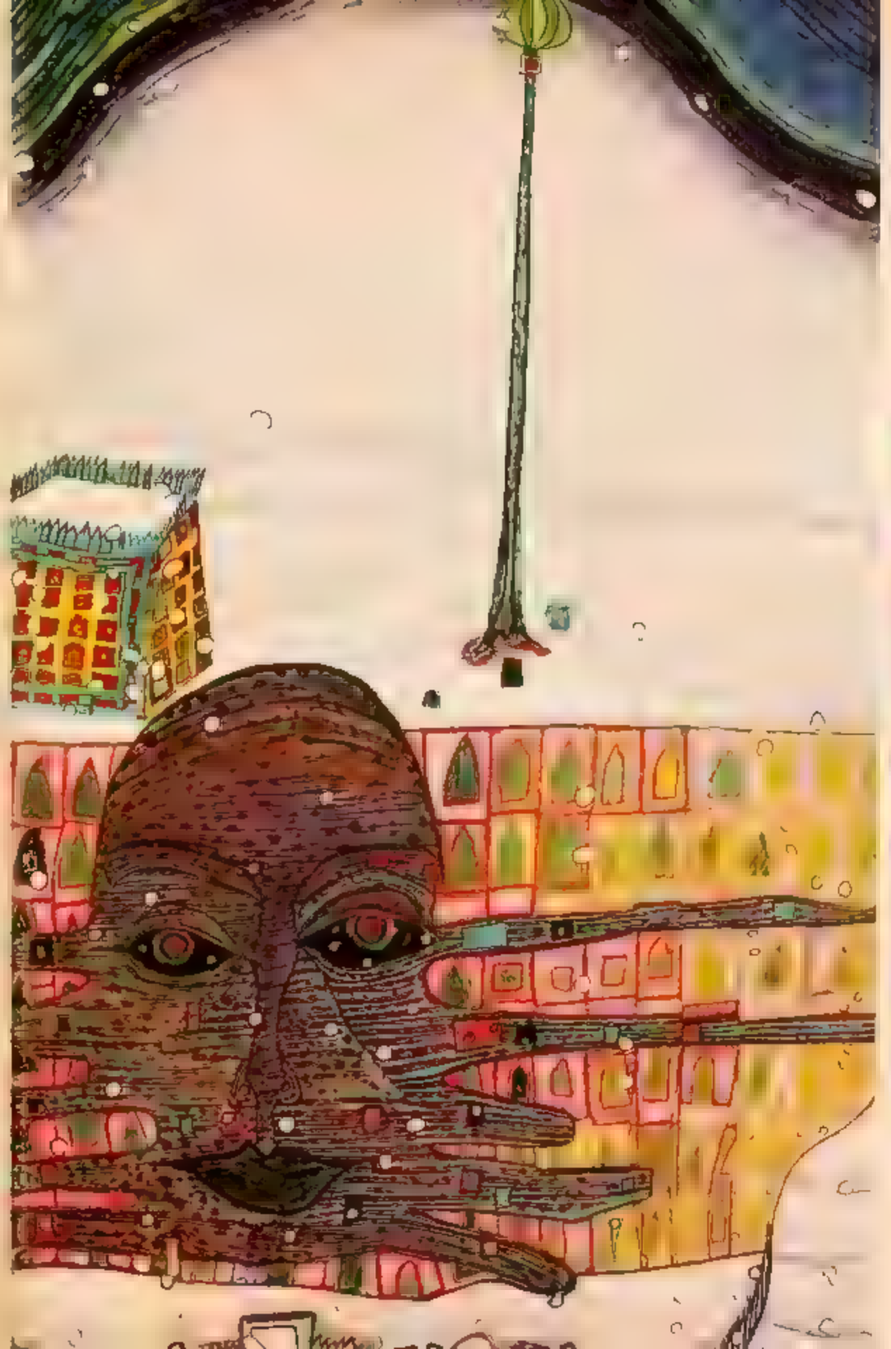
F RST BABY BORN AT SETTLEMENT OF TALIAN MM GRANTS PHOTOGRAPHER DA D E MO R

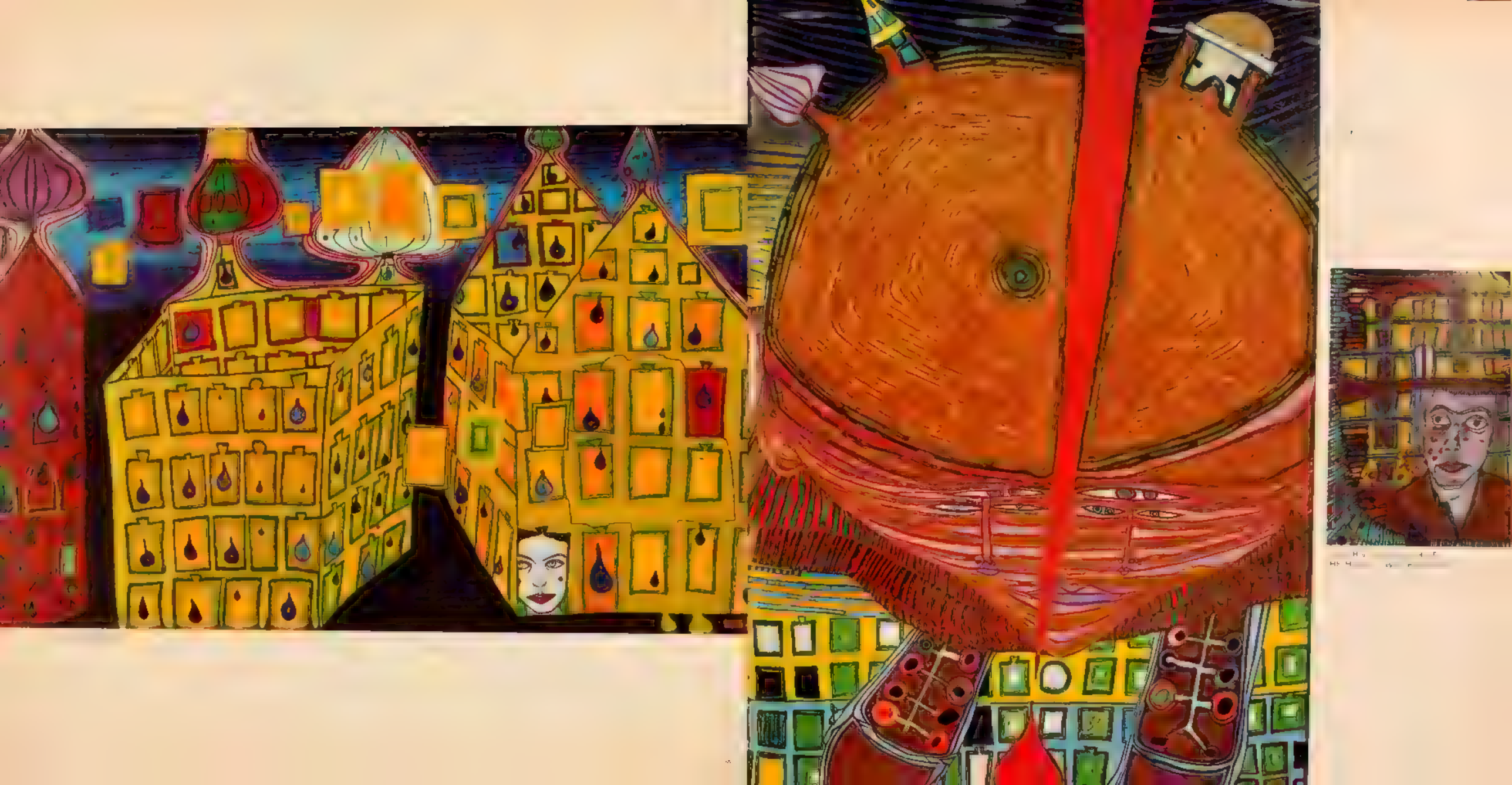
OVERLEAF, LEFT BREAKING THE LAND, PHOTOGRAPHER ROBERT CAPA

OVERLEAF, RIGHT GIRL SOLDIER PHOTOGRAPHER DAVID PERLMUTTER

# HUNDERTWASSER: POSTCARDS FROM PANDEMONIUM

Friedrich Hundertwasser is a permanent tourist in the enchanted kingdom of his own imagination. An Austrian Jew traumatized by the war and driven afterwards by wanderlust upon endless travels, he has discovered through art a sort of portable homeland not subject to the murderous rigidities of national citizenship. Here, in his private Pandemonium, the views are eternally marvelous and strange. And his paintings, like picture postcards of that exotic realm, bring to us psychic stay-at-home glimpses of unsuspected splendor and poignancy. Yes, there are people there and animals, buildings, cars, and landscapes, but they are not like ours. Much is recognizable but nothing is familiar, charged as it is at once with childishness and mysticism, with sensual excitement and a nameless sorrow. Hundertwasser learned rudiments of his expressionist style from Klimpt, Schiele, and Klee, but the rich color and personal intensity of his painting make his masters seem pale by comparison. Perhaps not since the Siennese School of 600 years ago has European art seen a more integral or affecting use of silver and gold patinas, and perhaps only Max Ernst among the moderns can rival Hundertwasser in the polymorphous inventiveness of his techniques. Moreover, his paintings have the rare ability to appeal at once to the simplest and to the most sophisticated minds. For through them he has shown us the country of our demons and angels, a place we all have visited in dreams. Hundertwasser lives there





# The Bigger They Are, The Harder I Fall!

THE MEMOIRS OF A FAT GIRLS' CASANOVA BEING THE FIRST IN A SERIES ENTITLED THE LUST BATTALION SEXUAL ADVENTURES OF THE AVANT-GARDE

[SEE BACK COVER OF THIS ISSUE]

BY MAX HESS

ILLUSTRATED BY RICK SCHREITER

In my life I have liked and admired fatgirls; in fact, I have loved and been loved by fatgirls. In my mind the adjective "fat" and the noun "girl" are one word.

There are fatgirls and there are the others. The seeking out, the looking at and the experiencing of fatgirls has been the ruling obsession of my life. The sight of a female figure of more than usual bulk has always made my heart beat faster and sent me off to observe more closely the size and quality of her charms. I do not mean the merely buxom or the "pleasingly plump," but the downright fat, what some would call "the grossly obese." The fatter the better, and my pursuit of fatgirls has led to amazing complications—but of that, more anon. As I grow older, the urge to pursue does not lessen; the size of the "objects" merely increases, for I find myself seeking ever heavier girls. This is probably a fortunate aspect, for it places ever-increasing limitations on the scope of my activity. However numerous overweight females might be, the truly fat lovelies are rare. And since I can hardly be stirred by one of less than 300 pounds, the field is reduced, if not the individuals.

Most of my life I have censured myself and deplored my urge, not because I considered it shameful or immoral, but because of the distraction and diversion of time and thought (and money, too) from my profession—archaeology. I felt it was unworthy of me to let myself be a slave to this obsession, and often tried to curb it, knowing that this, if nothing else, contributed largely to my failure to attain the scientific stature I might have, had I been as dedicated to archaeology as I was to fatgirls.

But like the drunk who swears repentance when he is full, so I would swear repentance when I was momentarily sated with wallowing in fat, either in fact or fancy. With me at least, the sexual urge returns far more quickly than the desire for strong drink, and very soon I would find myself once again in hot pursuit of a weighty prospect.

Finally, I ceased to condemn myself so strongly and so often, giving in with complete lack of character to my inclinations and indulging my unusual preferences as frequently as possible. I decided that this overwhelming passion of mine was so much a part of me that there could be no conquering of it, that I might as well accept it and enjoy it.

In looking back over my life I remember that my preoccupation with fat females manifested itself very early. One of my earliest memories is of the wife of the sexton of our church—an enormously fat woman who occasionally paid social calls at our home, where I could observe her to my heart's content close at hand. I could hardly have been more than five or six years old at the time, but I remember her prodigious bulk and her sweet face. I remember how good I felt just looking at her and being near her. Her sexton husband was succeeded by one who had an almost equally fat wife, but she was not nearly so attractive in person or personality as the first, yet she too invaded my childish fancy.

It seems to me that there were many fat girls and women in that old neighborhood of mine, in Baltimore, but at a very early age I had already begun to discriminate. The mere fact of a woman's being fat did not suffice to make her attractive to me. For instance, I had a schoolboy chum whose mother was fat, but in a poorly proportioned way. She was definitely unattractive to me. She had a ponderous bosom such as one hardly sees nowadays, but which was not uncommon among women 50 years ago, oddly enough. She was enormous above, but dwindled toward her hips, and when dressed was so tightly corsetted that she looked precisely like a pouter pigeon. But her homely example did nothing toward lessening my overall love of fat females. It only confirmed what I must have realized very early, that not *all* fat females are lovely and attractive.

This woman's three daughters, my friend's sisters, were also heavy in varying degrees. Unlike their mother, they were better proportioned and quite pretty. The youngest, who at this time was not the heaviest, had a beautiful face—a common characteristic of fat girls, but later became very fat and caused me some very disturbing thoughts, for by this time I was a student in high school and had passed puberty. Susan was four or five years older than her brother and I, and was hardly available to me in any sense, for I need hardly point out the tremendous gulf that exists between a teenage male and a female nearly 20. It is interesting to note that Susan, at her fattest, and at a time when fat femmes were especially unfashionable—had a very personable boy friend whom she later married, and I often wondered whether he shared my predilection for overweight women. It would be interesting to learn for apparently men of my preferences are fairly unusual, at least in our Western culture.

The oldest sister, probably in her late 20s at this time, had not so pretty a face as Susan, nor was she so well-proportioned, but she was definitely the fattest. Louise must have weighed at least 300 pounds, she lacked Susan's spectacular buttocks, but her monstrous bosom promised to rival her mother's in time. To me she was very exciting, and I remember a morning when I was at their home, waiting for my friend to accompany me to school. Louise had finished her breakfast and was preparing to leave for work. I helped her on with her coat, and the nearness of her huge body and her sweet fragrance near drove me mad with desire. I wonder if she could possibly have had any inkling of how her presence played havoc with my senses, so disturbing that that day at school was a complete loss—a loss that my marks could hardly afford. How I had longed to embrace her vast flesh, to make love to her in what would then have been an entirely inexperienced and inept way. What stuff she provided for my dreams!

Perhaps the fact that I myself was quite fat between the ages of 10 and 20 has given me such sympathy for the overweight. The persecution and ridicule that must be borne for the sin of being fat! How cruel, knowingly and unknowingly, in a thousand subtle and unsubtle ways we can be to our fellow human beings. It was thus that I was myself very conscious of my own size and weight, and hence suppressed strongly my inclination to cultivate out-size girls. Despite the dictates of my passions, I avoided them like death. For us to be conspicuous individually was bad enough, but how much more conspicuous we would be appearing together! What cruel comments this would elicit! Indeed, this was the curse of an incident as tragic and as ironic as any I was to know of personally for a good many years to come. In an apartment above one of the stores in the same block as my home lived a teenage girl, blonde and lovely of face, but quite fat—not tremendously so, but fat nevertheless. Even at that time, the middle 1920s, the craze to lose weight, to diet, to "slenderize," was rampant. Too terribly conscious of her corpulence, this girl—whom I remember only as Virginia—either starved herself to death or committed suicide by more direct means. She was a victim of the ceaseless, senseless persecution of the fat. I remember the shock with which I received the news of Virginia's death, how involved I felt. Perhaps if I had *made* the opportunity to tell her, to try to convince her that she was very lovely—not despite being fat, but *because* she was fat—I might have averted her tragic end. But I knew at the same time there was little point in blaming myself for my own shyness; my self-consciousness would never have permitted my becoming well-enough acquainted with her to

be at all convincing. And, most likely, she could not have been convinced.

My own corpulence caused me to shun fat girls. (Apparently I can't be consistent in my spelling of fatgirl as one word, so I will no longer try.) When I finally overcame my innate shyness—however much I have been able to compensate over the years, I am basically very shy—I did associate with girls, but always with thin ones. My first close relationship with a girl was during my last year in high school, and she was almost painfully thin. Lord knows there were plenty of fat girls in Baltimore at that time. There was a certain German bakery and ice-cream parlor in which we used to stop when we were out on dates, and where the waitresses were almost all beautifully fat. Whether light hair or dark, all had the unbelievably fair complexions that seem peculiarly Nordic; all seemed to have lovely faces, and all had such big jiggling bosoms and buttocks that I had great trouble keeping my attention on the dish before me, let alone on my hopelessly slender companion. These waitresses were the real dishes. "cream puffs," my first wife used to call them. Indeed they looked good enough to eat and I could have and would have "eaten" them without any hesitation. But fool that I was, I would have died of embarrassment to be seen in the company of any one of them at that time.

I met my wife, Jennie, through the thin girl. Jennie and I saw each other during the spring and summer of that year and were married in the fall. She was a beautiful girl by conventional standards: a very pretty face, perhaps too hippy and busty to be fashionable, but not fat by any stretch of the imagination. I thought myself so much in love with her that I considered my fatgirl-demon vanquished forever. We were both virgins when we met, but not when we married. We were sexually compatible up to a point, but not ideally so, as I discovered later.

The blame for dissolution of our marriage, six or seven years later, I take entirely upon myself. It is sufficient to say that soon after the novelty of sex and married life wore off I found my fatgirl-demon very much alive—in fact, healthier than ever. More and more my sexual fancies dwelled upon luscious fat girls, and any enthusiasm for intercourse with my wife depended more and more upon how vivid a fatgirl image I could conjure up. Inevitably and quite naturally I felt guilty and disgusted with myself at my weakness.

My wife was an intelligent woman and whether wisely or unwisely, I eventually told her of my obsession. Be it said to her everlasting credit that she tried to be understanding. She did not berate me or go into a tantrum. Instead she suggested very sagely that if I were to experience an obese woman sexually, I might be completely disillusioned. She seemed so convinced that I would find rolls and folds of shimmying flesh too unlovely, that I would be so disenchanted with fat girls that the demon would automatically be exorcised. I resolved to make the test at the first opportunity, although I had no idea with whom, when, or where. There was a very fat secretary with a kind but homely face in another department of the museum in New York where I worked, but I hesitated to make advances to anyone in my own bailiwick. One of my colleagues used to say that museum liaisons and romances smacked of incest, and showed a decided lack of initiative. The fat secretary was unkindly named "the blimp" by the other female personnel who were quite amazed when, a few years later, this girl resigned because she was getting married. Another indication that there are others like myself.

I had missed an opportunity during the summer I courted my wife. I had to go to Baltimore on weekends to see her, and hence was at loose ends during the middle of the week. It happened that one very warm evening I stood for a time on a corner after having had my dinner, reluctant to retire to my room, which was certain to be stiflingly hot. A very plump girl, with a pretty face, beautiful dark eyes and hair, walked past me and, as she did gave me a glance that I have seldom had cast my way. There was no mistaking that I could have talked and walked with her unrebuked, but instead I merely looked back at her, watched her turn the corner and enter a nearby apartment house. I was too much in love, I told myself, to follow such a tempting prospect.

Soon after I returned to my room nearby but was soon driven out of the house to see what breeze I might find, sitting on the front steps of the old brownstone. It was hardly cooler, but at least I did not feel as if the walls were about to move in on me. I had not sat there five minutes before I beheld the same girl walking slowly toward me, with a small dog on a leash. She was very buxom indeed, I noticed as she came closer, but hardly fat by my standards, yet she had a promise of softness that was quite exciting. That, plus her really lovely, expressive face and eyes, gave a momentary jolt to my monogamous intentions. If the invitation were to be made obvious a second time I would accept.

When she finally came abreast, she looked at me again in the same inviting way as before and, I fear, I made some very inane remark such as, "Dog, where are you taking that lady?" After nearly 35 years I can hardly remember what followed except that I suggested that she put up the dog and take a walk with me. Her name was Judy, and she came from Alabama—her accent was thick enough to charm me completely. I found her company quite delightful. She was as intelligent as she was attractive, and she even professed herself very much interested in "Amerinds" when I answered her question about my work at the museum.

Gradually we wended our way to Riverside Park, which still existed in those days before the Henry Hudson Drive destroyed it. This was a lovely stretch of paths, bordered by shrubs and large trees, along the river's edge below Riverside Drive. It was inevitably a trysting place. Judy and I found a secluded bench and sat down. To my great astonishment, she began to make violent love to me in a delightfully unladylike fashion. She told me that for weeks she had watched for me from the window of her apartment, that she had fallen in love with me as she saw me in orbit of room to coffee shop and back to my room, and that now that she had met me and found my personality as pleasing as my person, she was overwhelmed by her passion for me.

I am a mere male, I would be less than human if I had remained untouched by her protestations. I found them hard to believe, yet how could I help but be flattered by her feeling for me? She really was attractive, and just as soft and softer than I had imagined but—damned fool that I was—I did not let myself go. Instead I told her of my commitment to the Baltimore girl, and asked her forgiveness for not reciprocating as I might have. I count this as one of the great mistakes of my life. Virgin that I was, except for my wife-to-be, I might have learned much from this really lovely person, and might even have avoided making some grave errors later.

At least I did not close all doors, and when she finally bid me a passionate good-night in the shadow of the high stone steps in front of my house, I promised her that I'd be waiting again the next night—same place, same time. I hardly slept that night—it was not only the heat, but I was kicking myself for not having taken advantage of so tempting a morsel so easily to be picked. I resolved that the next night monogamy would be forgotten. I even got myself into a sweat of excitement thinking of what would happen if I succeeded in smuggling her up to my room.

Alas, she did not appear the next night, not the next, nor the next. I only saw Judy once again in my life, and that quite by accident. I had just come out of the subway on my way to the museum one Monday morning when I saw Judy walking toward me, carrying a suitcase, and accompanied by a very old man. As I came up to them, I gave her a questioning glance, and at the same time she gave me a nearly imperceptible shake of her head, indicating that I was not to recognize her. Unhappily, I never saw her or heard of her again. Now sweet, soft Judy can never be more than a pleasant memory of a very hot night in Riverside Park. And I have suffered a lifetime of chagrin for not having followed up such an advantage.

Nearly four years after my marriage I still did not know the joys of a soft fat houri, but it was not to be for long. With what was virtually my wife's sanction, I was more than ever predatory, but I was going to make certain that if I did find a prospect I would settle for no less than a very, very fat girl—no compromise with buxom Judys—and a prospect was not long in offering.

A friend of ours was leaving for Europe, where she was to meet a former love, to decide whether or not she really wished to marry him. She went to Vienna. Her musician-fiancé came from Salzburg to meet her—"prick in one hand and violin in the other," as one of our more ribald friends expressed it. Inga rejected him, returned to America on the next boat, and married her rich old sugar-daddy. All this is unrelated, but if Inga had not gone to Europe I would not have met Belle.

I had been given time from my job that July morning to see Inga off, and after the last libation had been drunk and the last farewell kiss given, I walked off the pier with truancy in my heart. I traced my way from North River along the middle 40s to Broadway, and as I walked I suddenly became aware of a very fine full female figure ahead of me. She walked with the slow measured step of many heavy women but gracefully and straight. I had to slow my own normally rapid pace to stay behind and study this vision more carefully. She was truly fat: broad back, soft shoulders, large upper arms, full calves that gave promise of even fuller thighs, a great broad backside that jiggled and swayed somewhat, but the soft, shimmying flesh obviously held in check by a restraining undergarment. She was neatly and tastefully dressed, and wore a shallow-crowned broad-brimmed hat that hid her hair. By now my heart was beating fast and my breathing was rapid. I hardly dared to pass her for I feared being disillusioned by what I might see in front. I could put it off no longer, the rear view was enchanting enough, but I had to see whether the front view matched. I quickened my pace and passed her slowly, glancing back casually (I hoped) as I passed. Saints be praised! It took only a glance to reveal a lovely face—dark eyes, dark hair, a handsome Jewess whose beauty asked nothing to be wished for. Her bosom was quite enormous and jiggled entrancingly with her every step, her knitted dress spanned a prodigious belly and the swell of her thighs. Here was a truly fat houri, she even looked highly intelligent—but now what? What was I to do to strike up an acquaintance with her? I followed the only course I could think of in this moment of intense excitement. I fell back and resumed following her.

Thank Heaven, she simplified things for me somewhat by going into a large restaurant-bar. Slowly she walked to a table in back and seated herself facing the bar, where I could see her very clearly but still at quite a distance. I seated myself at the bar and ordered a beer. Saints be praised! I was able to take full stock of my great discovery. I tried not to stare. But despite my good intentions, apparently from what I learned later, I did not succeed.

My friends, I have news for you—true ardency cannot be disguised by a mere male. That sweet fat morsel knew I was on the make from the moment I seated myself at the bar.

She finished her drink, she paid her check and she passed before me as she left the restaurant. Hardly had the door closed on her broad rear than I slipped from the bar stool and was in pursuit. She turned the corner, I followed. I came abreast on her right and said in a voice I didn't recognize as my own, "May I walk with you a bit?" God bless this wonderful female! For answer she took my arm in hers! Had she rebuked me, had she discouraged me by any word or action, I may very well have landed in an insane asylum.

We walked and we talked. Her accent was of the deep South: Louisiana, in fact. And to my ears so strange that I had to ask her to repeat what she said many times until I grew to understand her. Of all things, despite being Jewish, she had been born and raised in a small town in central Louisiana and now taught high-school English there. Like so many Jews, she was vastly superior to her surroundings, and she could not have served a backward community better than as a teacher of English literature.

We turned into the hotel on 48th Street where she was stopping. It has changed into a fleabag since, but at the time was highly respectable. I dropped back as she retrieved her room key from the desk clerk and inconspicuously as possible, I followed her to the elevators. But why this detail! I am impatient to get to that room!

Finally, we reached her room. The door had hardly closed behind us when I started making violent love to her in my own inept way. I fear I was not a good lover at the time. But somehow or other she knew in her wise womanly way that we were both acting out of character. She was no streetwalker, she was not an easy pick-up, she was not unfamiliar with the dangers for a lone woman in New York, but still she knew that I was not dangerous.

I learned that she had been quite as cautious about accepting my advances as I was in making them. But she had been depressed, she and her husband were recently divorced and she felt she had lost whatever charm she may have had. My approach and attentions restored her self-esteem, and so you see that my "timing" was most fortunate. Allah be praised! She and I were about to add a new story to the Arabian Nights!

I can hardly remember precisely all that passed between us at this first meeting. What shall I tell you? How her swaying hips drove me mad with desire, bumping against mine as we walked arm-in-arm to the hotel? How, once in her room I embraced her, kissed her mouth, her face, her neck, her arms—forced her to sit

on my lap so that I might be overwhelmed by the bulk of her? How in between we gleaned a little of one another's personal histories, then parted but only because the hope of seeing one another the next day made the parting bearable? As it was, I was long overdue at the museum, but I would hardly have let this be a consideration if there were not to be a rendezvous the next day.

The next 18 hours were an eternity of waiting. My wife? I told her everything, damned fool that I was. Never tell a woman anything of emotional involvement that doesn't include her directly. Much as I like and respect women, the fact is that very few, if any, can ever be truly detached or objective. My wife merely said, "My dear, don't let her crush you!"

The next day, as early as seemed reasonable, I was on my way back to Belle's hotel. Finally I was at the door of her room. But there was to be a delay. My love must needs go out to have a Coca-Cola breakfast to many Southerners and we must repair to the nearest drug store. I was momentarily suspicious that I was being put off, but that soon passed for she seemed quite the same as the day before. Again her hip bumped mine to my complete distraction, as we walked the block or so to the nearest soda fountain. I could eat or drink nothing. I was completely entranced by the way the stool at the fountain sank to the limit of its springed resistance under her weight, how her buttocks spread as her rear overflowed the stool.

Soon we were on our way back to the hotel, soon we were in the room, soon we were on the bed together, soon I suggested that we would be less encumbered if we were to remove our restricting, all-encircling garments, and soon she left me, to divest herself of her clothes while I undressed myself. (I had not yet learned the gentle art of removing a lady's garments.)

I am covered with shame by the memory of what followed.

Belle reappeared from the dressing room clad only in a thin negligee. She wobbled she shimmied to where I stood at the side of the bed, naked, phallus erect, waiting to receive her. How can I describe the rhythm, the grace of her movements, the steaming passion she aroused in me? She was so wonderfully corpulent! What could be more delectable, more beautiful, more desirable?

She seated herself on the edge of the bed. I parted her robe and seized each monstrous breast—each would have been several handfuls—and rubbed my aching member against them and thrust it between them. Great Caesar's ghost! what madness throbbed in me! All I ever knew of preliminaries, of *Liebesspiel*, left my mind completely. I rolled her on the bed, spread her huge thighs and thrust with unerring aim between her slippery labia and into her vagina. I have never known before or since lubrication such as Belle put out. Not only was it copious, but it had an unequaled viscosity as well, and she had a remarkable musky odor under excitement. That is also unique in my experience and which I found very pleasant, as if such a thing were necessary to arouse me with this woman. Panting like lily for certain.

To my everlasting shame, I had hardly entered when I exploded in a mighty orgasm. To make matters worse I withdrew simultaneously, fearing conception, and thereby robbed my companion of what little joy there might have been in my too-sudden ejaculation.

"A impoteman," she expostulated in disgust. How could I blame her? Yet a moment later she was making excuses for me, trying to save me embarrassment, and trying to be little the disappointment I had been to her.

How can I describe my chagrin at having failed this lovely fat girl? Yet consider my years of longing and frustration, of which she was the victim. I told her that she had received the tribute I owed to all the lovely fat girls I had known in the past only through my eyes and mind, that she was too beautiful, too utterly desirable a member of that sorority for my flesh and blood to resist. Such an assault on my self control had simply been too shattering, and I could only try to do better next time.

Belle thereupon proceeded to teach me more fine points of love-making than I ever thought existed. The unbelievable range of clitoral play and the vast satisfaction it can be to the female was made known to me, also the vast satisfaction that the male can receive from prolonging sexual play, to enjoy vicariously the ever-increasing violence of climax after climax in his companion from the expert manipulation of his fingers and lips, until both partners are aroused to impatience for coition.

This and numerous other details were revealed to me by this super-teacher. I learned more from Belle in one afternoon than in all four years of my married life.

Striving to make up for my failure to give her satisfaction on my first attempt, I benefited by the knowledge that Belle could not conceive. I would not have to withdraw. After the first violent storm, growing more familiar with my companion and her reactions, I was able to vindicate myself with her and to recover some of my lost self-esteem. I will spare you the details of my comeback and how we delighted in each other's company, sexually and otherwise, how lying back, stark naked after another more satisfactory engagement, we smoked and talked of many things. As a, I left a mark on Belle that day, a physical mark! It happened that she rested an ash tray on the broad expanse of her soft belly. I finished my cigarette before she did her's and, without thinking I crushed it out in the ash tray, which was made of metal and therefore transmitted the heat to her flesh. I was startled when Belle gave a short yip of pain, grabbed the ash tray and bolted upright suddenly. I apologized profusely and tried to kiss away the hurt but it did leave a mark. After the pain had subsided, we became rather playful over the whole incident.

"You're a sadist," she accused.

"I always brand my women," I replied. "I guess that shows you what a hot number I am."

"Yes, but I can always cool you off."

This eventful day brought still another incident that had far-reaching benefit for me, for this blessed girl disabused me of a misconception that had plagued me, and still does somewhat, despite everything. Always I had believed my penis was too small, inadequate for a good lover. "organ inferiority," I think the psychologists call the complex. Yet when I apologized to Belle for my lack of size, she was genuinely amazed, and assured me quickly that I had no cause to feel inadequate on this account.

Was there no end to the good things this wonderful woman could do for me?

I know from long association with fat girls that they always experience the greatest difficulty in obtaining clothes that are attractive and fashionable. It seems that the fashion designers have decreed that a woman who is fat must also be dowdy. Somehow the clever Belle defied this edict successfully. Just how she managed it I do not know, but she wore clothes that were wonderfully suited to her, designed to de-emphasize her size but not succeeding quite in hiding those voluptuous lines so precious to me. Whether she designed and made her clothes herself, as so many do who are in the same predicament, or whether she had them made, I do not know, but the results were most pleasing.

There is one gown she wore that I shall never forget. It was a brocaded black silk with a high neck line and two wide ties around the throat that were gathered and tied into a large bow at the back of her neck. This might seem too "cute" for someone of Belle's size and weight, but somehow it suited her exactly. I remember it so well she wore it on the last occasion that we were together.

The bow sticks in my mind, for this was the starting point—I pulled it open as the first step in undressing her. And then I possessed her and she possessed me in a way that is given to few and very seldom. My fat darling was imbued with an ardor on this occasion that seemed intended to rob me of my staying powers, her passion was so great, so heated, that *Liebesspiel* became an unnecessary abstraction, a psychological toy for the frigid. She drew me down on top of her, I sank into the featherbed of her broad belly and ponderous breasts, she spread her fat thighs wide and my throbbing cock slipped into her hot moist cunt, and then began one of the most wondrous rides I have ever had. With great vertical pelvic thrusts, Belle raised and dropped me, and I bounced up and down on her soft pubic pillow. What a sensation! I grabbed handfuls of her flesh and held on to keep from being thrown off. I am no lightweight, I must have weighed at least 175 pounds at the time.

of she raised and lowered me as if I were as light as a feather.

How long can flesh and blood stand such an assault? As a mere male, my climax was not long in coming. She and I exploded together in an exquisite giant orgasm that was all-enveloping, and that drained me as if I were a barrel with an open bung from which my very being seemed to gush forth.

How long we lay together, too exhausted to move, I cannot say, but so amazing can one's recuperative powers be that soon after we went through the whole incredible performance again with undiminished ardor, and even more enjoyable since it was more prolonged. And still a third time—the law of diminishing returns seemed temporarily suspended, for certainly the last was as good as the first. Time ceased to exist. I can only say that we were together no more than four hours and that in this time I established my only claim to a degree of sexual athleticism that I never equaled before or since, nor has any other experience lived quite so vividly in my memory.

It seemed that Belle and I never had enough time to spend with each other. And yet, on looking back I am amazed how little we were actually together. Eventually, Belle returned to Louisiana. We corresponded for a while, but we were never again to meet.

Two other fat girls were to loom large on my horizon before World War II and my own eventual military involvement. One was Gae Rivers, who preferred to be called Vicky for some unknown reason. Gae was a descendant of a family of early settlers on Long Island and was genealogically qualified to become a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution—a fact that gave her a great deal of robust and Rabelaisian glee. She had a very hearty contempt for this distinguished group of ladies, in fact, she delighted in being unladylike and had a wonderful ribald sense of humor. I like to think that she resembled the hardy wenches who were the original daughters of the American Revolution more than did most of the washed-out descendants we see today. I can picture her in the costume of a Colonial dame, cheering the lagging soldier with the delectable products of her kitchen stove, and of the oven she carried between her more than ample thighs.

My job provided a good opportunity to screen the visitors to the museum for females of unusual bulk, and one day my roving eye caught its first glimpse of the very corpulent Vicky in one of our wings. She appeared quite lovely to me, delightfully fat. I made a pretext of attending to some piddling matter in a case near which she was standing with her two companions, another young woman and a small child. My purpose was to get a better look at her and at the same time to reveal myself to her as one of the staff. I saw no wedding ring on her finger, and the child seemed to belong to the other woman. So far, so good. I tried hard to seem unconcerned and not to be taking any particular notice of Vicky, meanwhile taking in as much detail as I could. Again I was unsuccessful, as I learned later, in assuming a mask of unconcern. I seem incapable of the poker face, the dead pan. My high interest is always obvious, I cannot help but give myself away—ah well that could be an advantage. Women are always flattered by their ability to attract the attention of a roving male.

Finally they left the museum, I myself not too far behind. As they took up their position to wait for the next bus, I climbed into my car, quickly turned it around, and drove up to them. In a voice that I hoped did not betray my excitement and emotions, I offered to give them a lift in the direction that the bus would be going. When they told me what their ultimate destination was, I found that very conveniently I had a message to deliver to one of our trustees who lived in that immediate region.

For the life of me I can't recall one word of what passed between us in that for me agonizing ride. I hoped at least to have the home address of this luscious wench revealed to me, but I was to be foiled. They insisted on getting out at an intersection that I could only guess was the home street. I had that much just a clue. I cursed my ineptness. Had I been more expert a conversationalist I could probably have had them divulge all sorts of significant facts, but again my highly emotional state all but made me tongue-tied.

That evening I had a special demonstration to present at the museum. My disturbed emotional state was hardly a boon to smooth performing, but somehow I got through it. At last I had time to review the main happening of the day. I tried to picture her again. My God how I wanted that woman! I had always thought it a great exaggeration when I read of a man who wanted a certain woman so badly that he became sick to his stomach. This I experienced—not that I became violently ill but I did have waves of disgustful nausea rising from the pit of my stomach.

Like a private eye I set about determining where my lovely lived. Just how I framed my questions I no longer remember, but, stopping at a gas station on the corner where I'd dropped the women that day, I gleaned from the attendant that a person such as I described lived on this street, and that her name was Gael Rivers. By the greatest luck, the exact same name was listed in the telephone directory at an address on the same street. It seemed very encouraging, for a phone listed under her name implied that she lived alone, and that there would be no husband or other relatives as hindrances to my nefarious designs.

And now I used my favorite instrument to force acquaintance—a letter. Again, I can't

remember what I wrote, but I know roughly the form I use in such letters, modified to accommodate specific details. In this case I was able to refer to our meeting on the afternoon I gave her and her companion a lift naturally I spoke of how much I was attracted by her, and would she please call me or write to me, if this were possible? Perhaps I could have attained my purpose with a mere phone call, but in my experience all women love to receive mail, and especially letters from lovers or prospective lovers. A letter, well-planned and well-written, is one of the most romantic and one of the most seductive devices given the predatory male. True, it is also very compromising and most men would probably fear committing themselves on paper, but so far none of my female correspondents has ever made unchivalrous use of one of my letters.

In any event, the letter had its desired effect. In a day or so I had a call from Vicky the low, pleasing voice told me almost at once that this was the call I was hoping for. It turned out that Vicky was a telephone operator for Bell. I can never forget how our subsequent conversations were constantly being interrupted by Vicky's having to make connections on other calls while she held my line open. She was a veteran of nearly ten years in this occupation, having been employed by Bell soon after her graduation from high school. She was thin when she first became an operator, but had grown heavy on the job.

Soon we were seeing each other, although if you think that her calling me made this a foregone conclusion, you are wrong. On another occasion, a prospect to whom I had addressed one of my appealing letters was kind enough to call me and say, "Thank you, but I'm not interested." But with Vicky it was different. She did let me meet her and we did see a great deal of each other, but in a pecuniarily restricted way. She lived on the upper story of a two-family house, alone, but I could not call *at* the house for her. I always met her elsewhere, for she did not want to be seen by her neighbors going out with a "strange" man. The reason for this was that she was oddly committed to a man she had been seeing for some time and, although he was married, he was considered more or less her legitimate boy friend. He was well-known locally, his wife was an invalid who seemingly gave tacit consent to his relations with Vicky. Hence our meetings were clandestine in the extreme. My own marriage was hardly a consideration, for it was rapidly going on the rocks.

Vicky and I rarely went anywhere that we could be seen in public, with the result that most of our dates were spent in my car, just talking, while parked in one of the many byways of Long Island's beautiful hinterland. There were some very hot necking and petting sessions, which never accomplished anything ultimately for me. It was to be one of the most frustrating relationships I ever had. She was a highly passionate girl, obviously, she found me attractive, she permitted all sorts of liberties. I spent so much time "feeling her up," to use a vulgar expression—and that was almost a career, there was so much of her—and aroused her so often to the boiling point without attaining my final goal, that I cannot understand today why I would go back for more punishment.

I never did understand, nor try to learn what strange set of circumstances and emotions led her to be so strong in denying me. Was her allegiance to the other man so strong that she could not bring herself to be totally unfaithful to him? Her affection for me could not have been more apparent. She craved my company, my conversation, she called me at my job so frequently and talked so long that it became embarrassing. No doubt she fervently wished to shed the old liaison but just could not bring herself to it. She was as practical as any woman I have ever known, even hard-boiled at times, yet she was apparently completely unrealistic and soft-hearted in this instance. Women often have a remarkable capacity for fidelity. If Vicky was an example of this, I conclude that she was made of very strong stuff, for she was put to as severe tests as any to be imagined.

On one occasion we went to the Jersey pine barrens on a wild stormy summer night. I took her to a cabin deep in the woods, to which I had access, and where I knew we could not be interrupted. Again I aroused her to a fever-pitch of passion, forced her to lie down on one of the cots, and spread her fat thighs apart. I was like chilled steel, she was molten. And yet when I was on the point of entering, she begged me *not* to! Did ever a man show such forbearance? For like a fool, I acquiesced—only to be told long after that I could have had her that night if the cabin had only been less crude in its furnishings, that she was repelled by the thought of giving in to me finally in such coarse surroundings.

I seem to have been carried away with my story to the point where I have neglected to tell you what Vicky was like, physically. Of course she was fat—she wouldn't be in these pages otherwise. You know that she was of "early-settler" stock, which she showed in her unfortunate strength of will—but I haven't mentioned that she was about 5 feet 3, weighed 275 pounds, had wavy dark hair and piercing blue eyes, with well-developed smile-and-laughter wrinkles at their corners. Her mouth was neither large nor small, but rather thin-lipped. Thin lips or not, they could get sizzling hot, and her mouth was ever-ready for my passionate kisses. Her nose can only be described as patrician—straight and thin, slightly turned up at the tip—and with her generous chin and high forehead, thus gave her a very lovely profile. It was my custom to trace its lines with my forefinger, much to her amusement and, I suppose, satisfaction. Honest admiration is always welcome and should never be withheld. Altogether she had a very attractive face, just escaping being pretty because of its strength. This may seem a paradox when considered in the context of my story, but I insist she was a strong character.

And now to those large, fleshy charms that have been so much my preoccupation. Her breasts were large but not so huge as Belle's (Belle, by the way, was not so solid-fleshed as Vicky). One got the impression of great muscular strength under Vicky's fat. Her legs were satisfactorily massive and well-shaped, her thighs huge—despite their soft, fat cushions, they could clamp together on a roving hand (or whatever) like a vise. It was Vicky from whom I first heard the expression, "a Greek god with roamin' hands," and who once asked me during a necking session, whether I wanted to get my "palm red." Her belly was quite prodigious. Her buttocks were not so large as I would have liked, yet she was decidedly broad in the rear. I found the same fault with Belle: this is often a figure-flaw of very fat girls, although there are some with wonderfully enormous asses. Perfection I have not yet found, but I've had great enjoyment looking for it.

It must be kept in mind that there were chronological interruptions in the incidents I describe here. In fact, my breaking off the narrative to describe Vicky corresponds roughly with the chain of events. Just when my patience came to an end with my reluctant fat wench I cannot say, but I made it quite clear to her that I had suffered enough frustration and suggested that we postpone seeing each other until she could meet me on more generous terms. We did not lose touch completely—I called her, she called me occasionally. Our regard for each other had not suffered.

At some time during the late '30s or early '40s, Vicky phoned me and invited me to her home. This was it! I felt justified in believing that the impasse was broken. I was delighted for how could I forget her charms or the passionate promise of her flesh? I only hoped she hadn't lost weight.

She had moved to the ground floor of another two-family house in a more remote section of Long Island, but quite near a railroad. I can never forget how all that follows was punctuated by blasts of the train whistles as the trains left the nearby station. She was a meticulous housekeeper—this I knew from a single visit to her other quarters—but here she had far better accommodations and she had given her new home the true womanly touch. She was also an extremely fine cook. My mouth waters when I recall some of the delicious meals she prepared. Although I am fully aware of the danger of generalizations, it is nevertheless true that fat girls tend to be excellent housekeepers and excellent cooks: the latter by virtue of their love of eating and their interest in food. Whether they are fat because they like to eat, or the other way around, I can't say, although I have never known one who was a glutton. No doubt such exist, but I have known thin women—and men—who could eat circles around any fat girl I ever knew.

That first evening of my return to Vicky began most auspiciously—every prospect pleased. She was as enchantingly fat as ever, if not more so, and the knowledge that no interruptions would mar the comfort and security of her apartment gave every promise of a completely satisfying interlude.

At some point we began to make love, and quite naturally our excitement and anticipation ran high. Eventually I was lying stark naked on Vicky's double bed, awaiting her entrance from an adjoining room where she was removing her clothes. All my old ardor had returned with even greater intensity, for now there was to be nothing, nothing at all to prevent my possessing my fat love with all obstacles and barriers removed: in fact, in the lap of comfort. And yet there was something lacking. Despite my trembling excitement, I was less than chilled steel. Ah well, that would correct itself when Vicky made her appearance—and then she did. My God!, what an appearance. What a sight! Do you remember my first glimpse of the nude Belle? Vicky certainly was not less. Let no one tell you that the draped figure is more exciting than the completely nude. It just isn't so—not if you love and admire the nudity that you see. I loved and admired Vicky was wonderful! All her abundant unfettered flesh bouncing and shimmying toward me almost made me swoon with desire: her heavy breasts overflowing her vast belly, her big round arms and legs, her great thighs—all this and her lovely face besides. She lay down on the bed beside me, I kissed and nuzzled her soft, soft flesh, seized great handfuls of it—so warm, so white. She panted with passion, her mons and labia were hot and slippery wet. I manipulated the little boatman, almost driving her to distraction. For me, all to no avail—I was not chilled steel, but the Last Rose of Summer.

How can I describe my thoughts and sensations? This was frustration with a vengeance, a pluperfect predicament that all the demons in hell could not have dreamed up! Here the feast was spread, but mouth and lips were locked. I lost my head completely. I asked Vicky to lie on me entirely so that I could be weighed down by all her glorious flesh, a sensation I find quite thrilling: perhaps masochistically? Reluctantly she complied (they're always afraid of crushing you). Somewhere between the lower swell of her belly and thigh was wedged my cringing, flaccid devil, refusing to rouse to do battle. And then, soft and weak as he was, he vomited forth a mighty ejaculation. Could my disgrace ever be more complete? I cringe at the recollection.

What can one say to the innocent victim, the unrequited partner in love? I burst forth a flood of apologies, assuring her that the inadequacy was all mine, that she was entirely enchanting and exciting, completely lovely and desirable as always. "Darling, you kept me waiting too long," I told her. "I've become an impotent old man in the time I've waited for you!" And then her hearty, reassuring laugh. "Not at all. Another time it'll be different. It was nervous impotence. You were overanxious."

Over the years I still thank you, my love, for such forgiveness, such understanding. Women can be and often are, wonderful.

At last I am over the hurdle of recalling and recounting my disgraceful downfall, and I shall feel easier in telling of my return to grace through the forgiveness and good offices of Vicky, a big woman in more ways than one. Her prediction proved true, another time it *was* different. My self-esteem was restored and my prowess as a lover vindicated. Now came halcyon days, only to end eventually by the upheaval of war.

With no commitments on either side, no talk of marriage, without romantic nonsense we made good earthy love with a vigor and passion that makes me glow to remember. Not that there wasn't much genuine affection and esteem on both sides, but we were honest enough to acknowledge tacitly that our business with each other was sex and nothing but sex. Every touch, every caress, we knew, would sooner or later lead to the bed or the couch and to the blasting, shattering orgasms that we never again failed to achieve.

To have her lying with me naked, with her great tits, vast belly, and huge thighs yielding to me at last without demur, to have access to her hot wet mons: the delight of kissing, caressing, and biting her delectable soft flesh, to feel my lips on hers, my tongue in her mouth, my fingers tweaking the nipples of her breasts or thrusting through the hot wet labia: all this was mine now. Her panting, her gasps and cries of pleasure at the exquisite pain when I entered her: are all memories that cannot fade.

Over and over, again and again, we possessed each other. Each occasion seemed better than the last as we grew accustomed to each other's reactions and preferences, until we reached such a pitch of passion such a degree of perfection, that it seemed there could be nothing better. At this time I do not think that I was aware of the multiple orgasms rising in intensity to a mighty crescendo that some women are capable of, and that leave them completely satisfied and completely exhausted. I am certain now that Vicky could and often did attain this, and it led to a very disconcerting experience.

When we had reached a near-perfect state of rapport, we played a symphony one night that started with all the sweet melodies, so familiar to good lovers, that rose from one crescendo to another until the crashing finale with full orchestra. Drained of every ounce of strength after a few weak, final thrusts, I let myself down on Vicky's sweet broad bulk, resting my full weight on her as on a soft mattress. Were ever two people more depleted' I whispered something in her ear but got no answer. I spoke again, and no response. Apprehension started to grow in me. I stood up. My efforts to gently rouse her failed. She was without a doubt unconscious. I was frightened out of my wits! I had heard of the "sweet death," but this couldn't happen to my Vicky' I made certain that she was still in the land of the living, and oblivious to our naked state, I went to the phone to call her doctor. I had just found the number when she stirred. I rushed to her, touched her, and dreamily her eyes opened with a vague stare that gradually changed to full awareness.

"Where have you been? Don't *do* this to me." I wailed, but with indescribable relief in my voice.

"I've been in seventh heaven," she replied dreamily.

An understandable bias leads me to take Vicky's word for it that these blackouts of hers were genuine, flattering, but disconcerting to say the least.

It seems to me that I met Bess in the interval between my ultimatum to Vicky and my return to her. And, as I recall, Bess departed before Vicky returned to me.

One of our men at the museum, an attendant named Joe, enjoyed a reputation as an accomplished cocksman and womanizer. He was of Italian descent, not especially good-looking, but with a personality that made it understandable why women liked him and went down for him. For one thing, he possessed that indispensable asset to the philanderer, a genuine affection for women. Women seem to have an uncanny discernment of this in a man: it cannot be pretended, and where it truly exists it can make conquest easy. Joe liked all women, was interested in all women, loved many, yet cleaved to one in particular--one whom he always returned to, indeed never left.

Joe played a short but important role in my relations with Bess--I met her through him. In conversations with Joe I learned a great deal about his affairs with women but, to his credit, no names were ever mentioned. Inevitably such confidences led me to tell him of my craving for very fat girls and, sophisticated fellow that he was, he never said he thought this odd but, with *de gustibus* acceptance offered to introduce me to one.

It happened that this girl was a close friend of his own inamorata, and he would say no more than that she seemed to have had an unhappy love affair and was ripe for a new man in her life. He arranged a double date for himself and me with his own girl and Bess.

It was a bright October evening in the late 1930s when Joe and I went to meet the girls in mid-Manhattan. I drove a fairly large car at the time, but my new companion I noticed with great satisfaction had such a delightful expanse of ass that she quite filled the wide seat beside me. Here was a lovely one indeed! No more than 5 feet 2 or 3 inches tall, she weighed at least 250 to 260 pounds, blonde hair with a reddish tinge, a milk-white skin, a full, round face with large blue eyes, a small, straight nose, a small mouth and good chin, large belly and thighs. Such abundant rotundity charmed me completely. But the breasts, I must mention, were disappointingly small. Ah well: one can't have everything. All this I was able to assess while maneuvering through the midtown traffic, hoping, before the end of the evening, to be able to take stock of fat Bess in greater detail.

After the amenities had been observed, our companions in the back seat found that they had an engagement at a destination where I could drop them conveniently and so, with exemplary tact, they left Bess and me to ourselves. Silently I thanked Joe, he had understood me well, and his choice for me was perfect.

I found that Bess, who was about 24 at this time, knew very little about Manhattan except the midtown section, and was quite satisfied to be driven about through the dark canyons of the lower end of the island through the streets that teem with humanity during the day but are forsaken at night: Wall Street, Nassau, Hudson, lower Broadway, the Battery. We drove along the deserted docks of South Street, the Fulton Fish Market, and then west to Washington Market, which is a beehive of activity at night and early morning.

She was delightful and intelligent, and seemed not at all bored by this simple excursion, having declined earlier the usual movie or theater. I made some tentative passes as I drove through the deserted streets--traffic hardly required both hands on the wheel. I stroked the soft cushioned knee and the bulging thigh near me without her raising a protest, but did not permit myself any familiarity beyond that.

We stopped at a Childs Restaurant that, surprisingly, was still open, although nearly empty of guests. After having some refreshment, we resumed our drive for a short time and then, early as it was, she asked to be taken home, pleading fatigue after a hard day at her office. I felt I must have failed somewhere along the line, but I believed I had been as attentive, complimentary, and gracious as was appropriate to this first meeting. I have never believed in, or employed, the "fast line." Beyond the very small caress mentioned above I did nothing that even the most puritanical mind could have taken exception to. I did not even attempt to kiss her: for my policy has always been not to press too hard on first occasions, never to do anything that isn't encouraged, to do less than expected, rather than more, for this intrigues and builds up confidence at the same time. Imagine my amazement when I learned, long after that Bess was afraid of me that first night! I must have had a very wicked gleam in my eye--my usual inability to hide my feelings--but had she known me better she would have known how safe she was with me. It is especially strange because she was no inexperienced virgin, not by any means.

Apparently I had built up so little confidence that she did not even entrust me with her address, but asked me to leave her at an intersection near what she claimed was her mother's home. This was most irregular and sounded false, which it was. But Bess seemed hell-bent on keeping her address a secret and, although I protested, if for no other reason than that the street was dark and forsaken, I settled for her promise to call me soon to arrange another meeting.

I was very puzzled as I drove back home that night. I could not, for the life of me, see what I had done wrong. My perplexity was to increase, for weeks passed without Bess's calling me. I could only conclude that I had miserably failed to make a favorable impression on this most-attractively-fat wench. I had a sympathetic confidant in Joe, who seemed especially disturbed because he had arranged the meeting: in fact, he seemed to feel that his own honor as a lover was at stake. We comforted each other by agreeing that women were unpredictable and unreasonable people. And Joe felt obliged to divulge some of Bess's history.

She lived alone, working at the time as a secretary, although she was a college graduate and had been a teacher. Indeed, I was to see much of the schoolteacher in Bess. She had become infatuated with a very handsome but very ignorant young Italian. After he had gotten her with child he abandoned her, but she managed to shift for herself somehow. The child was born, a girl, but after a few months it died: perhaps a good thing, but Bess was inconsolable and became despondent to the point of breaking down completely. At the time of my meeting her she had started to come out of her depression, apparently due in great part to the efforts of a very charming gentleman whom I met later. He was much older than Bess, had a rather shrewish wife, and undoubtedly found her an attractive diversion from his home life. At the same time he did her an inestimable service by bringing her back onto an even keel, for which I am sure he has Bess's eternal gratitude as well as mine.

Possibly the high regard in which she held him, and her obligation to him, kept her faithful and led her to deny whatever attraction she may have felt toward me. This is pure conjecture, but a good face-saving explanation for me! At any rate, more than a year after that night we met, she called me on the telephone. To say that I was amazed and flattered is putting it mildly, and to my great satisfaction she gave me the perfect opening to say, "When can I see you again?"

A rainy afternoon in February--George Washington's Birthday, to be precise--found me emerging from the subway near Eighth Street, that main thoroughfare through the heart of Greenwich Village, along which Bess had a second-floor apartment above a shop. I was admitted by the lady herself and, after formal greetings, was introduced--much to my disgust--to another visitor, also female, but a hindrance nonetheless. I needed no fears, for she took herself off in due course.

It was a most cheerful room: the excellent fire and excellent sherry offset the gloom and cold out-of-doors. Most warming to me was the sight of Bess stretched out on a sofa, her short skirt revealing a most exciting expanse of bare fat legs, soft dimpled knees, and a bit of massive thigh. A split seam, high on her hip, caused a bubble of white to peep through as the thin dress clung to her uncorsetted flesh. The fire and the sherry were hardly needed to produce a hot glow in me, and I began to wonder impatiently what the next move would be. I didn't have long to wonder. Draining her glass, Bess sat up, not bothering to prevent her skirt from rucking up over her great white thighs, and said, "Come on, Max, let's go to bed." Her voice was so casual that I could hardly believe my ears, but I needed no second invitation. I suppose I must have sprung from my chair like a jack-in-the-box and, taking both her hands to help her to her feet, followed her into the bedroom. She slipped out of her dress before I could even remove my tie, and now stood before me naked, for she had been wearing nothing underneath.

"It isn't a pretty sight," she said, but I quickly protested.

Bess, don't *ever* say that! I think you're *beautiful!*" I said it and I meant it. To me she was beautiful: her bulbous beauty had only one flaw, that her breasts were much too small for the rest of her.

As I shed my clothes--quicker than I ever shed them before--I looked at her, hardly dropping my gaze for an instant except when some detail of my undressing required it. I was completely delighted with what I saw--such creamy shoulders! As blonde a Germanic beauty as ever there was, despite her English-Irish ancestry. I could hardly wait to take her in my arms. At last, rid of every stitch of clothing, we met in close embrace--our lips and tongues joined in a long hot kiss as we swayed and strained against each other, my phallus--hard and eager--bored into her pillowy belly.

My lips wandered to her neck and shoulders, my tongue flicking in and out, tasting the deliciously white perfumed skin. And then I noticed that we were standing--not by design--in front of her dressing table, the long mirror giving back a thrilling image of us. It was profoundly exciting for me to see myself hugging my sweet fat Bess. The old French knew what they were doing when they installed mirrors in the boudoirs at Versailles. It is wonderful to see and feel, to look and do, all at the same time.

Gradually maneuvering her around so that her rear would face the mirror, I was rewarded with a full view of her heavenly fat hindquarters: the biggest roundest, fattest whitest cheeks I had ever seen! My hands reached around as far as they could to caress the upper swell, my fingers digging into the lovely soft flesh as I strained still harder against her.

She thrust against me and wrapped her arms about me, kissing her and caressing her, yet not dropping my eyes from the mirror. I was reaching such a degree of ardor that I feared I would blast off before we ever reached the bed. To me the hips and buttocks of any woman are the most exciting, more than the breasts, large buttocks are essentially feminine, and a big-assed fat girl is the epitome of femininity. It is the exaggerated, if you like, femininity of fat girls that makes them so superlatively sexual, and this is what is resented by the skinny-sisterhood.

But come: let us to bed.

And so we did go to bed, and we did have a highly satisfactory encounter of the flesh, remarkably satisfying for both of us, the more so considering that we were new and unaccustomed to each other. But my memory is curiously void of exactly what took place other than the usual preliminaries and finally, coition. This is especially strange when I think how clear my recollection is of what went on immediately before, and which I have been able to describe in such detail.

It reminds me of a story I read many years ago about a merchant of Marseilles--Marius, by name--who was telling his friend and business partner about a trip he had had to make to Paris, and of the Parisian whores with whom he had had bed. He described the wondrous way they dressed and undressed, the color and texture of their lingerie, the grace of their movements, their artistry in arousing their customers. With every word he eulogized the girls of Paris to the disparagement of the girls of Marseilles.

Meanwhile, his partner was becoming breathless with suspense through this long recital of preliminaries, and finally said impatiently, "Yes, yes--and the rest?"

"Ah," said Marius, "the rest? Well, that was just like in Marseilles!"

I do not wish to imply that Bess, as a bed partner, was commonplace--not at all. She did seem more shy, more self-conscious, than Belle or Vicky, and our sessions were far less stormy than some I had had before and have

had since. All fat girls are self-conscious, and drop their shyness only with frequent and emphatic assurances that they are beautiful and desirable to their lovers, despite any disparaging and humiliating criticism aimed at them by the rest of the world. When they are fully convinced of the truth of your assertions, they often become joyously and madly abandoned in their bedroom behavior which, allowing for my bias, makes them the best of all possible *objets d'amour*.

Bess was especially conscious of her small breasts and discouraged me from kissing or caressing them in the usual ways, claiming that she did not find this at all stimulating. If this was true, she differed from every woman I've ever known sexually, but I think whatever stimulation such manipulation might have caused could have been offset by calling her attention to them and reminding her of their lack of size. She remarked to me once that she wished she had a "big bosom," but then I would have liked to have had a longer penis! We are all the victims of these whims of nature and, once our clothes are off, must make do with what we have.

Whether or not it was part of the same complex, Bess preferred copulation from behind, happily for me! She claimed that from in front it reminded her of childbirth, but it could just as well have been that she disliked the conspicuous role of the breasts in this position. Whatever the true reason for her preference, I most assuredly had no cause for complaint, for however much nature may have shortchanged her in the front, the same was not true in the behind – her butt was gloriously big and fat. The thought of sinking my cocky devil into the deep valley between those two huge mountains of white flesh was stimulating enough to discount a thousand times the lack of bosom. I became an ardent and dedicated ass-kisser, to caress, to wobble, to kiss, to bite those broad cheeks became one of the joys of living, and I do not think I flatter myself when I say I never gave my sweet-assed darling cause to regret this concentration on her behind. She gave every sign of high enjoyment, and it is well-known that the buttocks can be highly erogenous in Bess, probably far more than her breasts.

It must not be concluded that we forsook the front entirely – certainly not. The wonderfully broad soft belly with its deep navel crater, the great round thighs with the deep-pocketed cushion in between, the proud little clitoris in its hot bath of lubrication all received their full and due share of attention. And sometimes I would enter from the front too, for variety if for nothing else. But it must be confessed that her lovely big ass was my main preoccupation. I fondled it, I used it as a pillow, I stroked it, kissed it, dipped into it, until I had aroused us both to a satisfactory state of incandescence. And then, barely able to straddle its great expanse, I plunged into its hot molten depths, hands spread on the broad cheeks, or resting on the pillow of her back, kneading and stroking the lovely flesh as she pushed back hard against my thrusts with a rolling motion which I returned clockwise, counter-clockwise. To feel those wonderful buttocks under me and against me, to penetrate into the juicy vagina, all this sooner or later bringing on the shattering climax, the excruciating orgasm.

Bess was a gay and charming companion both in bed and out, she was witty, amusing, and well-informed. When I called her "Lotus, my bloom of sweet oblivion," she retaliated by nicknaming me "Hop-toi," which she said was Chinese for "he who approaches from behind." Later I remember her telling me of a newsreel she saw during our Lotus-Hop-toi days. Some shots in a Midwestern zoo were flashed on the screen, among them one of a female hippopotamus named "Lotus!" Bess said she whooped with glee and howled with laughter until people around her turned to stare at her, thinking she had taken leave of her senses.

Bess was an animal lover and surrounded herself with pets. A tank of guppies and a turtle on the floor here and there were harmless enough, but when her Persian cat and her Pomeranian fought sham battles *under* the bed while we were attempting serious fornication *on* the bed, I found it distracting to say the least. It was also disconcerting to have the cat, in her efforts to escape the dog, land in the middle of your back during a crucial moment. I called them our "cheering section," but usually persuaded Bess to exclude them from the bedroom if the weather was not too hot for closed doors.

It was not long after that the atmosphere began to lower, Bess became edgy and seemingly apprehensive, not her usual cheerful carefree self. Then one night she kept going to the windows, parting the drapes just far enough to see out, as if she were expecting someone to be there. Another time she asked that we not put on any lights. This was too much, and I asked her point blank the reason for her melodramatic behavior. Whom did she expect to see out there?

"My old boy friend has followed me here," she said, meaning the father of her dead child. "He's a very violent man. He could kick up rough."

"Good God, Bess! What can he expect of you? Certainly you are the one to 'kick up rough' if anyone should. What in the world does he want of you?"

"I don't think you should come here anymore. From now on I'll call you and we'll meet at the Village Bar on Eighth Street."

And so it was that we changed our scene of activity. I would take a room in the old Keswick Hotel just off Washington Square, and after having a few drinks with Bess at the bar on Eighth Street, we would adjourn to the hotel. The Keswick was a cheap, live-in hostelry, a relic of the '90s. Everything about it was ancient, even the lighting was so dull as to simulate gas light, and not very good gas light at that. But a large wooden double-bed that must have supported a multitude of humanity in their sleep, in their fornications and probably in death, too, in the course of its existence, was the only piece of furniture of importance to us.

In the old bed we recaptured some of our former rapture, but it was never quite the same. The carefree spirit was gone. One incident did relieve the somber atmosphere for a few moments. On this occasion, with Bess under me, I was rapidly reaching the moment of truth, I thrust harder to push her and myself over the brink into simultaneous climax – *and just then the bed collapsed!* I had given the *coup de grâce* to our venerable couch. Under our combined weight of nearly 450 pounds, it gave up the ghost with a mighty crash.

After the shock had passed and we had recovered our senses, we burst into uncontrollable laughter – this was slapstick comedy in the best tradition. In a situation so ludicrous, robbed of what little dignity we had left, we rolled with laughter until we lay exhausted, panting for breath. Helping each other, once we had regained control, we extricated ourselves from the wreckage. We dressed slowly, expecting at any moment a knock on the door and a demand for an explanation of the disturbance, but apparently no one had complained to the desk and, since we were on the third floor, the night clerk could hardly have heard us.

With faces as sober as we could muster we descended to the lobby in the ancient cage-elevator and, not daring to look at the clerk as we passed him, gained the street, and once more burst into gales of laughter. But the comedy had its tragic aspect too, for the collapse of the bed presaged our own collapse.



no need to wonder whether we dared ever go back to the Keswick again.

There came a night when I sat at the bar waiting for Bess hour after hour, but she did not appear. In vain I scanned the crowds from my seat at the front window as they passed on the street. No Bess. Nowhere was her sweet fat figure to be seen. Puzzled and worried, I sensed that this was the end.

Whether she had no phone at this time, or whether she had had the number changed, I do not know, but I could not reach her. Finally, in desperation, I called her sister.

"Don't try to reach Bess," she told me. "She's married now and her husband is a very jealous and very violent man."

Stunned, I hung up the phone. So she had married the very man who had gotten her with child and then abandoned her. Why?

The war was over. I was back in New York. By devious ways I succeeded in getting a message to Bess. I wished to see her again, if only to be assured that all was well with her. Fortunately, she wished to see me, too.

On a cloudy spring day we met in Washington Square, a stone's throw from the old Keswick where we had broken the bed. Though not exactly thin, she was a mere shadow of her former hefty self.

"Bess," I said, "it took me a long time to figure out the answer. Tell me if I'm wrong. You married Maroni because you wanted another daughter just like the one you lost."

"You're right, Max, you're absolutely right. And now I have two daughters," she said. Two daughters and a stud who was no longer wanted.

As I take up my *Liebeslied* again, I fear that it's more *Leid* (suffering) than *Lied* (song), and I risk losing whatever little esteem my friends hold me in now.

I resume my account in the year 1948, after I had returned to New York and to the museum. The demon was at work in me. Like a drug addict I craved ever stronger and larger doses, especially larger. As I mentioned before, the museum made good hunting grounds. I prospected assiduously and there were many suitable prey, but almost always they were married women, usually with children. You can draw what conclusions you like, but you will possibly have noticed throughout this account that, no matter how fat they are, there are always men in their lives. I wonder if the same could be said of the skinny ones? Sophie Tucker once said she never knew a fat girl who wasn't married. Undoubtedly, this may in part be due to the endocrine changes that childbirth effects in many women, and many who were slender when they married became fat after they had children.

There was one young woman, always accompanied by two young children, who came to the place quite often. She was colossal! She could not have been more than 5 feet 2, yet she must have weighed close to 400 pounds, all of it well-distributed. Invariably she was well covered by a voluminous coat that prevented my assaying details, but certainly she had sheer size. Her face was not too bad, but she had small, suspicious, peasant eyes.

I followed her in my car one day as she strolled home. She did not take a bus, but walked the entire way, and finally turned in at a doorway between two shops on one of our neighboring business streets. It was not a good neighborhood, but not one of the worst by any means. Obviously, she lived in an apartment on the floor above the stores. Again my imagination came to my aid. I stopped in the shop underneath her dwelling, a tobacco and sundries sort of business, and asked the old lady who was in attendance the name of the woman who lived above, taking care to mention her outstanding attribute, her size. I told her I was a photographer and that the woman had had me take pictures of the children, for which she had never paid me. I had failed to get the woman's name, and now was anxious to pursue the fee that was justly due me. The saleswoman assured me that mine was not an uncommon case: all sorts of bill collectors inquired of the woman upstairs. It saddened me to learn that I had almost instinctively struck precisely the right note to gain the confidence of my informant. I regretted that I had added a false debt to the lady's account, but secretly rejoiced at my good fortune. Without hesitation the woman in the store gave me the name of the fat lady. With an address and a name to which I could address a letter, I felt that my conquest was half won.

I wrote a letter – a letter that a five-year-old child could have understood. I told her quite frankly how much she attracted me. I mentioned that if she had any "spirit of adventure" she would meet me at a nearby street corner at a stipulated time, just to let her have a look at me and decide whether or not she would have any part of me.

Be it said to the credit of my misused powers of suasion, she was there. She would not step into my car, we spoke with her leaning into the window and me not moving from the driver's seat. She was intrigued by my phrase "spirit of adventure" – just what did I mean by that? With complete candor, I replied "Sex."

Undoubtedly the lady was flattered and I was nothing loath to follow up the advantage. We made a date – a day-time date – and I drove her to a secluded spot and parked. We talked, we did nothing but talk. We must have both decided we liked what we saw. She was enormous! so monstrously fat that I could feel the drag on the clutch of my car, and the sag of the right side, when she got herself seated. She was not quite the ignorant peasant type that I expected. Her name was Lily. And she had more virtues than anyone would have thought possible.

Lily was without a doubt an ignorant woman, just barely literate, but she was not unintelligent. She was of Irish descent, the husband who had abandoned her was of German-Italian origin. He gave her no support for the two children, so she was on relief. Her size, and her lack of skills and education made her virtually unemployable, besides, what would she have done with the children while she went to work? I felt infinitely sorry for Lily and did what I could to make her life a little brighter with occasional gifts of money to the children to give her. I didn't want to insult her by making it seem I was paying her. And goodness knows, I was none too prosperous at the time and could ill-afford what little I did give her.

Her husband had left her when, after the birth of the two children, she had become too fat for his taste. A wise physician had tied off

her Fallopian tubes- a boon for me, not having to worry about conception. Like most women who have had intercourse regularly, and then have suddenly been deprived, Lil was glad to have a bit of sex life again. We didn't establish any bedroom records or attain any sublime heights of sexuality, but we did have good times together. She was gratifyingly huge, and I took delight in wallowing in what she called, disparagingly, her "blubber." Actually, for one so fat, she was remarkably firm-fleshed.

This, my first intimate experience of a lower-class home, was by no means disheartening. Lil's apartment was roomy enough, though the furnishings were rather stark. Linoleum covered the floors- no carpeting or rugs. Hot water had to be heated on the gas range. She kept the place spotlessly clean and, though I might have wished for her more of the comforts of life, she had nothing to be ashamed of- and she herself was always neat and clean, too. But then, I doubt whether dirty fat women are any commoner than dirty thin women- although "slob" is usually preceded by "fat." This is just another instance of the unfair humiliation to which the fat people are subjected. They have no monopoly on slobbism - the thin slobs are merely less conspicuous.

To return to Lil and me. We both suffered some nervousness and embarrassment on our first meeting in her home, but I believe I succeeded in dispelling this by complimenting her on the cleanliness and neatness of herself and her home. She insisted on feeding me coffee and cake, and I tried more or less successfully to make small talk on her level. I confess I never found this to be easy, but I think I have seen enough of the world, and of all strata of society, to be able to place myself for a time in proper relation to my companion regardless of what his or her background might be. And so it was with Lil. I was able to put her at ease quite soon. I found that she was unnecessarily impressed by my position and, by inference, learnedness.

"I could tell by your letter," she said, "that you are a very educated person." I was touched by her comment, yet I did everything in my power to disparage the intellectual difference she obviously felt as a barrier between us. Often she would say that she could not understand why I bothered with her. Ah well, sex reduces us all to the animal level- the great equalizer that recognizes no social or intellectual barriers.

As soon as I could, without seeming too precipitate, I began to fondle Lil's enormous breasts- amazingly firm and well-shaped for a woman who had had two children- and let my hand creep up the skirt of her stiffly-starched wash-dress to feel her monstrous thighs. She wore little or nothing underneath. I was enchanted by her sheer bulk, everything about her was huge- again, all except her buttocks. Her hips were vast, her belly immense, her arms and legs tremendous, but her pygal development was not in proportion to the rest of her. No matter, I had in her a superabundance of flesh to manipulate, enough for even me, big buttocks might have been gilding the Lily! As it was, I had doubts that the short sword with which I was equipped could penetrate all this flesh to the strategically erogenous parts.

The flesh was very accommodating. With her great tits pushed up under her chin, her ponderous belly rolled up into a vast mountain of flesh that virtually hid her face, I managed to thrust between the slippery wet labia and penetrate to a sufficient depth for her satisfaction and mine. We found later that when she stretched crosswise of the bed, her butt close to the edge and her legs and feet straight up in the air—and when I stood on the floor my arms embracing her legs as, leaning forward, I rested my weight against the backs of her thighs -I could attain maximum penetration. (This is, of course, a familiar position to the experienced and hardly needs further explanation to the readers of Avant-Garde.) We even did well from behind in the prone position, which would hardly have been possible had her buttocks been any higher than they were— the very quality she lacked working to our advantage.

I fear that these recitals of my fornications become monotonous, but the mountainous proportions of my partners in sexuality, and the problems they posed, do lift them out of the ordinary. On the occasions when, for one reason or another, we could not use Lil's apartment, we had to make do in my car. My sedan was anything but capacious, but it had one advantage- the lower portion of the rear seat could be lifted out and placed in a slanting position, a makeshift couch to accommodate Lil's vast bulk. With the rear door open, and by letting our feet and legs project to the outside, we were able to copulate quite satisfactorily. I particularly remember one cold winter night, with three or four inches of snow on the ground. We found seclusion on a lonely woods road where no one would see us or discover us. Using the position described above, I was, for a time, standing in snow, my bare backside exposed to the cold outside as I quenched fires within. Once our passions were satisfied, we suddenly became aware of the all-pervading chill. Today I can hardly believe that I was once capable of such hardihood.

It is hard to understand why I brought an end to my relations with Lil. I think I must still have had some kind of conscience, and there were several aspects about the affair that troubled me. For one, we were too close to my place of work- in a region where everybody knows everybody and everything about them. Diagonally across the street from Lil's apartment was a drug store, owned by two friends of mine. They had a full view of Lil's doorway, and I never went in that I didn't hope and pray they were not looking out.

I missed the sessions in which I could revel in all Lil's fat, and I missed the sight of her stretched naked on the bed, incredibly enormous- like the mother of all the whores in the world- but we had nothing else in common, and it seemed best to end our relations before we became too much a habit to each other.

Not long after, she moved to a different address. I saw her once or twice on the street after that, and she had lost weight. Her daughter told me that Lil had been married again- to a very old man. At least this probably provided her with some security.

Because I wish to write of something in a happier vein, I shall tell of Patty -a short, compact *boule de suif*- small-breasted and big-assed. 5 feet tall and weighing 220 pounds. She was the smallest of my fat girls, invariably cheerful and jolly but often a bore. Patty was sandy complexioned, had reddish hair, hazel eyes, a small turned-up nose, and a puckish face.

he is the one fat girl who came to me, whom I didn't have to pursue. Patty happened to collect, and make, ceramics. She telephoned me at the museum one day, seeking some information, and we finished by making an appointment. Naturally, I had no idea what the woman was like physically. Imagine my amazement when early one Sunday afternoon this well-dressed roly-poly figure came bursting into my office. "Egad!" I thought to myself, "They're beginning to come right to me!"

I really did have myself another fat one. I could hardly get rid of her. In seemingly no time at all, Patty's ceramics were forgotten and we were on a highly personal plane of conversation. When I told her of my weakness for fat girls, and pointed out how happy the accident that brought her to me, I think I could have gone to bed with her right then and there. I locked my office door so that we would not be surprised. We kissed and embraced, and I did a bit of judicious exploring. I let my hands travel over her broad rear- secure from attack in a tight-fitting panty girdle—so round, so firm, so fully-packed, so free and easy . . .

Patty became a frequent visitor and an even more frequent caller on the telephone. The conversations could start out interesting enough, but she insisted on prolonging them to the point of utter boredom, and I would have to contrive excuses for hanging up. I would interrupt her, carry on an imaginary conversation with some person in the office with me, and then return to her, begging to be excused because I was suddenly needed elsewhere. Or I would say, "Sorry, Patty, got to run." I hated to be so blunt with this good-hearted girl.

So far I had not been to bed with her, but our petting sessions in my office would become quite torrid. She left no doubt that she was to be had, despite her being engaged to a rich little Italian boy in her home town- she most decidedly did not want to marry him, or anyone for that matter. This she proved by breaking the engagement finally and remaining single to this day.

Patty loved good food and she was constantly asking to take *me* to dinner or luncheon, at *her* expense naturally. It was rather embarrassing, but I did go with her a few times- she obviously enjoyed these occasions so much that it was difficult to refuse her. (It is also difficult to write about this without seeming to be a heel on the one hand and conceited ass on the other.) Despite the easy-going quality of our relations, Patty was not precisely what I was looking for. I wasn't playing hard to get, I just didn't want to play! We did get to bed, finally. Once in late summer when I was at loose ends, I spent a night with her in a mid-town Manhattan hotel. It was enjoyable. She was a jolly companion and we had a good time together, but I didn't distinguish myself as a great lover, and she didn't impress me as the ideal bed-partner. We've not been together again in that way.

Perhaps the best indication of how frank and free we were with each other is that I even told her that I was out for bigger, fatter game, and actually had her scouting and reconnoitering for me. I had her try to strike up acquaintance with a really fat girl whom I had discovered in the city and who attracted me mightily. Earlier I had tried a direct approach, which failed horribly and which I dare hardly think of- let alone write of. But it occurred to me that Patty might become friendly with her—"We're both fat, so what the hell!" Later, I might insinuate myself as a friend of Patty's. Ah, what a devious bastard I can be! The amazing and generous Pat made two attempts to get this girl into conversation but was rebuffed, reporting that the girl seemed morose and ill-tempered. I have often speculated on what could have blighted this person. Could she really have been so terribly ashamed of being fat and so self-conscious as to ward off the friendly advances of another woman who obviously had the same "failing"? I can only conclude that this was so.

Another attractive prospect that Patty discovered and promoted fizzled out for more or less the very same reason. The girl was a virgin, a devout Catholic, devoted to her mother, and so horribly sensitive about her corpulence that, in combination with all the rest, she would have been unapproachable. To make matters worse, she soon began a crash diet, became seriously ill, and died. How many times each year the country over, the world over, is this tragedy repeated? What a waste!

Living right next door to the house where Patty used to live, was an extremely fat woman who had won local beauty contests in her youth. She had grown tremendous after her marriage, and her husband neglected her for other women, and she resorted to starvation diets. Eventually she, too, ruined her health and died. Pat knew of a doctor near her who operated a reducing mill. He guaranteed to take off ten pounds within a week, and women from the entire New York area flocked to his office. Eventually nervousness, irritability, sleeplessness, and headaches contributed to ultimate discouragement of this quack's victims.

I have let myself wander into a digression however, on a subject about which I feel very strongly. Too bad that I cannot open an office to restore the self-esteem of disheartened fat girls, give a morale-boosting course at no cost, and never say diet!

Where shall I resume my story? Should I tell of Jacq Jensen, a large singer of specialty numbers, to whom I made love by mail but never met? She appeared on TV, and I wrote to her in care of the broadcasting company. My letter was forwarded and there began a correspondence that was unbelievably intimate. My letters were addressed to her theatrical agent, but one of them was opened by Jacq's husband and he wrote me a violent letter calling me a "sex fiend." Jacq was gleeful about it, said I shouldn't give it a second thought and thereafter addressed me as "Dearest Sex-Fiend"! Soon this correspondence petered out.

Or should I tell of Ruth, wonderfully steatopygous Ruth, whom I first glimpsed on a subway train at nine o'clock in the morning? I followed her to her place of business and then, finding her again a few weeks later, handed her one of my carefully prepared and seductive letters as she was leaving the bank where she was employed. The letter took effect, and I wined and dined her until I damned near went broke. She played hard-to-get. At last we spent an evening together, naked, in a hotel room -only for me to find myself hopelessly impotent! Delectably fat and big-assed as she was, I was yet unable to do a thing. Ah, how weak the flesh can be regardless of how willing, how inflamed the spirit. This is one of the most hellish frustrations a man can suffer and, to me, one of the most mysterious of sexual phenomena- but enough. Be charitable. Allow me to relegate fat-fanny-ed Ruth to unfinished business.

Better, let me tell of Tony—christened Antonia Maria with a long Italian surname- Tony the enchantingly rotund and corpulent girl from the 5 & 10 Cent Store. Ah, now there was a one! It was in the big Woolworth's in Garden City that I spied her, stooping in front of a counter, revealing a most entrancing expanse of round rear-end. I was not alone at the time but, as unobtrusively as possible, I took stock of her. When she stood up I could see she was indeed a real *boule de suif*, although very young, a figure worthy of my attentions. Her sweater and tight skirt showed an opulent belly and buttocks and promised heavy thighs above the round fat calves of her legs. Her arms, especially her upper arms, were quite enormous- a quality which I find highly exciting. I resolved

to return later, when I was unencumbered.

I returned the very next day, but I could not find her. She had obviously been one of the sales help, so I questioned the girls at the counter. I have never met with such stony and suspicious stares. It was most disconcerting, and quite mysterious. None of the clerks admitted to knowing anything about the girl. I was beginning to wonder whether I had imagined her.

On mulling over the matter, I decided upon a bold stroke. I would go to the manager of the store with a cock-and-bull story. Screwing up all my courage and histrionic ability (I had trained myself almost to *believe* my story), I gave the manager my true name and position and professed to be an amateur painter. I said that I was in the process of painting a carnival scene: Mardi Gras in Rio, and that this girl had struck me as being the perfect model for my central figure. Of course I described her well, emphasizing her bulk. As I spoke, my hopes began to sink. His expression became more and more puzzled: he was honestly perplexed. It was not my story he doubted, he really couldn't remember the girl. However, he proved most cooperative and went to his files. This refreshed his memory, he decided that the girl must be the one who had been employed for only *one day*. He had no record of her name or address, but he did give me the date of her employment and suggested that I go to the Woolworth personnel office in New York for the information.

Not long after, I went to the personnel office and from the clerk in charge of employment records--a little old woman in a room by herself amidst rows and rows of file cabinets--obtained Antonia's name and address. Elated with my success, I hied myself back to the Island and started to hoe the second row. The address I had was a dilapidated house on a side street. Ah well, I wasn't looking for a rich girl, and, after all, any girl seeking employment at Woolworth's would hardly come from a family in the upper brackets. (Incidentally, when Tony was let go after only one day at the store, she was given no reason, she subsequently told me that she concluded that it was because she was too fat!)

Now I rolled up the big gun, the heavy artillery--my letter-writing pen. I carefully considered the probable educational and cultural background of this girl and composed a letter which I hoped would be simple, understandable, convincing, and titillating. I suggested that if Tony were sufficiently intrigued, she could address a reply to me through a fictitious name in care of General Delivery. I promised to reveal my true identity if I received such a reply. This was, perhaps, an unnecessary precaution, but I saw no reason for telling her who I was before she accepted my letter in the spirit in which it was intended. It is all too well-known in legal circles that letters are dangerous weapons which can destroy reputations and even put one behind bars. To be absolutely safe legally, one should never write a letter--probably not write anything at all! (So why am I writing this?!)

After a reasonable wait, I went to the post office and, to my delight, found a letter from my weighty wench. She wanted us to meet and, to my chagrin, remembered me from the store. Apparently I am totally incapable of concealing my excitement when I am confronted with a fat hour! My emotions seem to emanate from me and strike like a missile. I thought I was being very unobtrusive in observing Tony, I am not aware that our eyes ever met or that I looked at her full-face, yet she sensed that she was being scrutinized. (In the same way, some years earlier, the fat girl at the circus in Madison Square Garden picked me out of a crowd gathered around her side-show. Her gaze met mine and she smiled at me and started to speak to me. I have always regretted that I didn't follow up that overture, for I have always boasted, facetiously, that my ambition in life was to screw the fat girl in the circus. Ah well, I can't have them all--pity!)

I can't recall just how or where my first meeting with Tony took place, but I know it must have followed the pattern of all our subsequent meetings. I would pick her up in my car at some street corner and we would drive to a secluded woodland spot, of which there used to be so many on the Island. An hour or two stolen from my job, a few hours at night: we would talk, and kiss almost chastely. Tony would let me take certain liberties in feeling and caressing her bulbous charms, but there was a point beyond which she would not let me go, and I didn't insist. She was affectionate but not passionate, she obviously enjoyed my company, and I liked hers. She was always cheerful and good-natured, but it was to be some time before we ever came to the point sexually.

There were several reasons why I did not press her too hard. First of all she was quite young and inexperienced, and strongly inhibited--the latter evidently due to a traumatic incident in her past. A few years earlier, she had been sexually assaulted and horribly beaten. Hence I was always very gentle with her, never trying to force anything.

Eventually I did break down Tony's maidenly reluctance and it was "maidenly." To my surprise, her maidenhead was intact. Apparently her attacker had not been able to penetrate so far--understandably so, for with Tony's mighty thighs clamped tightly together, nothing but a metal wedge could have gotten between. For me she opened them wide, but I took little delight and no joy from it. She was still tense, she would not relax and, as far as I was concerned, she was as virginal afterward as before. I wondered whether she would ever be capable of the abandon necessary for the enjoyment of intercourse. There was no satisfaction in my conquest for, having penetrated the hymen, I had still to reach the woman.

Although I have rarely used a gun or rifle, I am a hunter at heart, and I've done a lot of hunting of one kind or another. My pursuit of fat girls has very much the aspects of the chase: the hunt for sign, learning the habitats, following trail, and deciding the best means of bringing down the game, once it is sighted. Not necessarily to take her to bed, although that can be a delicious climax to the chase, but just to become acquainted with the sweet thing, perhaps merely to help her self-esteem, to convince her that, despite what unkind people have led her to believe about herself, there are some--and one in particular--who think she's lovely and delectable.

I have many times deplored our stupid custom that makes it reprehensible, even criminal, to address a strange female on the street. Just think of all the friendships, the love-matches, that are never made because we insist on formal and "respectable" introductions before the sexes can even speak to each other! Just think how much loneliness could be prevented if people who are attracted to each other could make the fact known any time, any place. I have often wished that I had more nerve, or at least the power to project my thoughts, to inform some weighty wench by telepathy that here's a fellow who thinks she's a beauty--and that it might be fun to get to know him. Ah well, it just doesn't happen, and no one will ever know the frustrations I have suffered. And this seems to suggest quite naturally the subject of the Big Ones Who Got Away.

Naturally, the hunting grounds are not restricted: the game can be found almost anywhere, but there are certain areas more favorable than others. Subways, buses, and ferries always have possibilities, as do bus depots and railway stations, if for no other reason than that the volume of human traffic passing through them sooner or later reveals something of the desired size. I have spent many hours prospecting. The most productive areas of all are the stores that specialize in large dress sizes: Lane Bryant's, Roaman's. How many luscious fat dolls have I not found in this way! But all in vain. For this is strictly window-shopping, look, but don't touch. Oh, I've seen some very heavy hours in this way, but it is interesting that of the many I've seen one stands out with the pristine clarity of perfection.

It was an unusually fine day in August of 1958. I had to go downtown for one thing or another, and I decided to spend some time in my happy hunting grounds: Fifth Avenue, between 42nd and 38th Streets. Lane Bryant's is at 40th and Fifth, Roaman's just west of Fifth on 38th, and two enormous dime stores are on two corners of 38th. The fat ones go to Lane Bryant's, then to Roaman's, or vice versa, almost invariably visiting the dime stores in between, stopping at the lunch counters for refreshment. On this day I was walking down Fifth and had just reached 38th when I became aware of what promised to be a most unusually large figure ahead of me, walking in the same direction, but on the other side of 38th. I quickened my steps, rapidly overtaking this dream, and she was that at least from behind. She was young, not too tall, not too short, but oh, so broad! What a marvelous expanse of full-round rear she displayed! Her fat arms bare, for she wore a sleeveless dress, were satisfyingly huge, as were her rounded calves. She walked with her legs far apart, which promised enormous thighs above. (Which reminds me of the two fat ladies who asked a very bow-legged floorwalker in a department store where they could find talcum powder. "Walk like this," he said, as he turned to point the direction. "If we could, we wouldn't need talcum powder," they replied.)

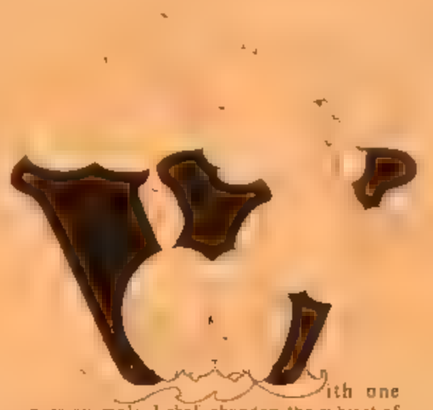
From behind, this girl was a delight, but as always I wondered whether the front would match the rear. She was flanked by two other women, one young and very thin, the other shorter, fatter, older, and very large-butted. I decided immediately that this must be the fat one's mother, I could hardly believe that the thin one was her sister. I had come up a few paces behind when they stopped, turned, and looked about, obviously perplexed. Now here, if I had been bolder and more resourceful, I might have been able to strike up an acquaintance. Possibly they were tourists, and out-of-towners are usually not nearly so suspicious as the hard-boiled resident. I might have asked whether I could give them directions, for I would have made book that they were looking for Roaman's, and it turned out I was right. As it was, I merely passed, slowed, and turned to see what they would do, but I had a glimpse of her face, and what I saw may have robbed me of initiative. It was beautiful, a most perfect! And the rest of her--how beautifully proportioned! A gratifyingly huge bosom and fair round-broad belly, and her full-skirted dress could not hide the swell of her great thighs. What a dish, what a dish! The most beautifully proportioned fat girl I've ever seen! Why is it that there are so many idiots who refer to fat women as being shapeless? They usually have more shape than anybody else.

I followed the women: passed them, turned, and repassed them. My God, she was lovely--dark wavy hair, dark skin (possibly just tanned), and large dark eyes, small nose, full sweet lips. In short, a face like the full moon in its beauty, as the Arabs would say. But her expression was unsmiling, even sullen, and I wondered whether the usual indignities and frustrations suffered by fat girls were to blame. How I could undo that, had I the opportunity! When I finished with her she would have the self-assurance of Helen of Troy. But alas, it was not to be. I could only look and admire, and only a few more minutes were left for me to watch this vision of loveliness before she passed out of my life forever. Do you wonder that I damn to hell our stupid customs and ethics? What can there be "right" about letting such potential happiness go by? We are a long time dead, and to saddle us with mores that prevent us from making the most of what we yet may spend is refined cruelty: man's inhumanity to himself.

I watched her cross Fifth, and as I guessed she made a bee-line for Roaman's. I stationed myself outside, waiting for her to emerge. I didn't have too long to wait. She and her damned companions walked west on 38th to Sixth, and made the circuit back to Fifth and 38th. This gave me a bit more time to assay this ample figure. The more I saw, the more I was enchanted. She had an ass that I would have sold my soul for.

Finally they flagged down a taxi. My dreamboat and the thin one got into the rear, but the other sat up front with the driver because there just wasn't enough room in the rear seat. And there she went, never to be seen by me again.

My Beatrice's departure in a taxi was typical. After many years of watching fat lasses, I know that they take cabs more often than you'd think possible. They hate to use public transportation. As a result I have always secretly yearned to be a cab driver.



With one more example, I shall abandon the subject of my failures and frustrations. The last, however, illustrates the depths to which I can sink, or at least the devious, even Machiavellian methods I can employ and the dissembling of which I am capable when the game is afoot and the scent is hot.

About 20 years ago, I was invited to give a lecture to the students of one of the many state teachers colleges that exist in Pennsylvania, and it happened that the dean of this college was a relative of a close friend of mine. As is common procedure, I was sitting on the stage of the large auditorium with the dean, just before my lecture, watching the students file in and take seats. Suddenly I became aware of a more than ample female figure--"enormously obese," some would say--and watched her take a seat on the aisle fairly far to the rear, but not too far to prevent me from realizing that here was a young lady of really unusual proportions. I could even see that she seemed to have a very pretty face. This apparition was most disturbing and my excitement threatened to shatter my stage aplomb. With an effort, I recovered from this distraction, and was soon on my feet making my presentation in what I hoped was my usual smooth manner. However, I could not keep my eyes from drifting to that luscious figure. The program came to an end. I had to watch impotently as this large young lady left the auditorium with the others.

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into my car take leave of my friend the dean, and head for home. But in driving those 150-200 miles, I had time to think and to devise a plan I had the advantage of knowing the dean he would help me find her

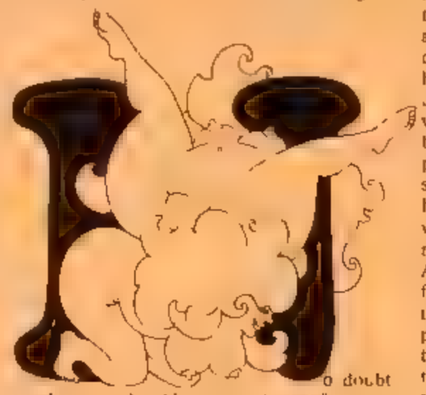
Immediately after I returned home I wrote to the dean. I wrote a cock-and-bull story of how I had noticed at the time of my lecture a very fat girl who bore a striking resemblance to a cousin of mine upstate with whom I'd lost touch. I described her as best I could and asked who she was. Now there's a very obvious flaw here I would be expected to mention the name of my cousin. The dean was under no compulsion to volunteer the girl's name, but happily he did, and I lost no time in writing to her, one of the cleverest and best thought-out letters I've ever written It reached her, and I received a charming reply

We entered into a very active and delightful correspondence She was a highly intelligent girl, and we touched on many subjects I always insinuating my appreciation of her weighty charms and suggesting that we arrange to meet as soon as possible

I learned many things about Gretel from her letters. The first was disappointing She was *not* the large girl I had seen at my lecture Gretel was sitting at an entirely different part of the house It also became evident that Gretel was not nearly so big as the other, although she was still fat enough to be self-conscious of her size. She sent me a snapshot of herself, taken from the waist up, and showing a very hefty girl with a pretty face

Some months passed without my being able to go back to the college, or for her to come to New York But the Christmas vacation would allow time for her to come to the city, and we planned some of the things we would do. I had to be very circumspect, I could not mention some of the things I *hoped* we would do together, for I had also learned that Gretel was an innocent, and most certainly a virgin. But, we would let nature have its way What was to be, was to be

With her visit in prospect, and anticipation running high, I was shocked to receive a letter from a female cousin of Gretel's accusing me of seduction by mail, and asking me point-blank whether I was married, and just *what* my intentions were toward her unsuspicious relative. The damned interfering bitch! Obviously Gretel had told her about me I wrote her a polite letter in which I pointed out that however nefarious she thought my motives she could be preventing Gretel from enjoying a valuable experience, and possibly a romantic interlude that could be quite harmless but very meaningful in the life of a girl with so unfashionable a figure as her cousin's. I told her that Gretel might have reason some day to regret letting her cousin's interference stop her from having lived a little. I wondered what Gretel thought of the matter afterwards. But that was the end, I never heard from either one again.



No doubt you have wondered by now just what form my seductive letters take they have loomed so large in all that has gone before, and they've had quite a high degree of success in my pursuit of corpulent cuties

To begin with, collecting data about the girl is of paramount importance or we have no place to go with our letter. Naturally, the methods vary with circumstances. For instance, you see a weighty-wight get into a car and drive off Quick! get the license number Call up the Vehicle Bureau, explain that you were following a car and it lost a valuable hub cap. You would like to return the hub cap to the owner, but you have only the license number of the car no name or address. Usually you will get both

I once learned of the existence of a very fat young roly-poly nurse's aid, in a local hospital by overhearing a reference to her in a conversation between two other people All the data I had to go on was the floor she worked on. I called the hospital, got the floor nurse, and told her that I had been a patient on that floor some months before that I was a seaman and had been away for some time, that when I left the hospital a very generous nurse's aid had lent me some money, that meanwhile I had accumulated enough to pay her back but had lost the slip of paper on which I had written her name and address. Would she please give me the lady's name and address? Naturally I described her—size alone identifies in such cases—and I got my information. Perhaps I'm wasting my time I should have been a private-eye detective!

Prepared with another cock-and-bull story I went to the address I had been given. It was mid-morning. This is the best time to approach married women, for I had been prepared by the "Mrs." given me with the name husbands are least likely to be at home at this time of day during the week. I told the fat girl that I had been sent by the museum to pick up a ceramic owl that the person at this address wished to donate. She assured me there must be some mistake, that the only bird on the premises was her parakeet, which bless her - she invited me in to see! I admitted there must have been a mistake in the address, but meanwhile I had ample opportunity to survey her more-than-ample person. Oh, she was a doll A very fat young doll, and her uncorseted figure covered only by a robe left little to my imagination a real butterball with a very pretty face. Ah! I was tempted, very much tempted I could have followed up my advantage with a letter, which depending upon the state of her relations with her husband -might have been rewarding. But I didn't. I was afraid It was all too close to home There have been at least three other prospects whom I lost for the same reason Such indiscretions can be very costly

You have been kept waiting long enough for a sample of my famous letters the missile missive. Eros's dart. Ah, but remember no two of these were ever exactly alike God forbid I should use a form letter to a favored fating. Here, then, is an example of a dart aimed at a "no-data" prospect, a pachynymph of unusual size and beauty

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*My dear Miss "X"*

*It is unfortunate that I cannot address you by your true name but I hope that by the time you finish reading this you will want me to know who you really are. You see, I have admired you and thought about you from the first time I saw you I think you are quite lovely and want very much to know you.*

*It happens that I am very fond of heavy women. All my life I have loved fat girls very fat girls I despise skinny women! The emaciated, starved-out females foisted on us by Hollywood and by the fashion world called "beauties," are a disgrace to their sex. I deplore no end the craze to slenderize, a national disease that has made physical and nervous wrecks of so many sweet fat girls, even driven*



that the volume of human traffic passing through them sooner or later reveals something of the desired size. I have spent many hours prospecting. The most productive areas of all are the stores that specialize in large dress sizes Lane Bryant's, Roaman's. How many luscious fat dolls have I not found in this way! But all in vain. For this is strictly window-shopping, look, but don't touch. Oh, I've seen some very heavy hours in this way, but it is interesting that of the many I've seen one stands out with the pristine clarity of perfection

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the war, and she was to meet him and marry him. Whether she was picked up for vagrancy by the police at the instigation of her family—she was under-age at the time—or whether she became disillusioned by what she learned of her boy friend and his family, I do not know. But she did come back to her own home, with little more damage than a punctured hymen. I have often thought since that I would have liked to know this fellow. Apparently we had tastes in common. After all, he did have in mind marrying Veronica; at least I assume he did.

There's another thing we can dispose of right now. Veronica was a Catholic—a half-assed Catholic, if she doesn't mind my saying so. When I first knew her she was more or less devout. She used to tell me of her arguing points of theology, of doctrine, with erudite priests. She was a very bright girl, and I had great respect for her intelligence.

But all this is getting away from the erotic, which is our main concern. Veronica was the most voluptuous, the most passionate, the most responsive, the most erotically oriented woman I have ever known, and yet she was anything but a nymphomaniac. I have grown old in the time I have known her, and she cleaves to me under what I think are insupportable hardships—yet she maintains her strict monogamy. But I'm getting years ahead of my story. Let us hark back to the halcyon days when I was fully potent and had found a sheath worthy of my steel.

I can begin with an admission. The second time Veronica and I met was very much like the first—nighttime, a fog, a secluded back road. Fortunately I had a car, a station wagon, that lent itself to adaptations required by M'Lady's size and our activities. For instance—and this shows what an attachment I had formed for the girl at this early stage—I wanted to "eat" her the second time out, and what's more, I did. Having fingered her to a fever pitch of passion, I had her spread herself out on the floor of the station wagon, and I tongued her into orgasm after orgasm. At one point she said, "Oh God! Nobody ever did this for me!" Why not? Who could be more deserving? And then I screwed her. We managed somehow. Her belly was enormous, but we made it. It was terrific. We had met—we had found something in one another that was so elemental that it has lasted. Veronica was—and is—the most unbelievably responsive, most abandoned sexual companion I ever knew. She had faults; serious figure faults. She lacked the big buttocks of which I am so fond. She was heavy, yes—but it was all tits and belly. But, Oh God! Let me lie next to her and I can forget these shortcomings. She is a featherbed full of life, responsive life. She responds to my every mood and need, and I to hers. I fear that she may be my last outpost of sexuality, and this has worried me much of late.

I've gotten very far afield, and very much ahead of my story. Winter finally ended; spring came and changed to summer. Where we were fighting cold on the back roads, we were now fighting mosquitoes. But how can I begin to describe what happened between us? This girl, this Veronica—she was unbelievable! Dream stuff. Men spend their whole lives and do not ever experience anything such as this! She was utterly submissive and utterly abandoned. I remember one sweltering night especially. We had had our fill of sexuality. She was lying out in the back of the wagon. Somehow, I was on the front seat. I sat up, lighted a cigarette. Every time we finished a session, we were bathed in sweat and wiped ourselves with large towels. As I say, I was smoking a cigarette, seemingly surfeited with sex, when the large figure in the back stirred, raised herself, and lifting her great lovely tits, laid them on the back of the front seat, confronting me like two enormous globes. That raised the devil in me. I kissed them, I sucked them—the little nipples stood up straight and proud—and then we screwed again.

Veronica was not perfect, but her face alone could have made up for a thousand faults. De Maupassant has said, "After all, the face is the dessert." It is more than that. A face can make or break. High forehead, deep-set eyes, high cheek bones, the soft contour that is the fat woman's claim to beauty—all that she had. To see that face in orgasm became a privilege that I strove for again and again. I dedicated myself to her orgasm. It was so much more important than my own. After all, the male climax is a nothing—a nosebleed, a urination? Some males have claimed to have had bowel-movements that were just as enjoyable. But to see my Veronica attain climax upon climax—that made it all worthwhile.

Somewhere I read recently that if the man sees a smile of satisfaction on his partner's face during intercourse, he can depend upon it—he has accomplished nothing. If, on the other hand, her breath comes in mighty spasms, if she has an expression on her face like Christ-crucified—then, and then only, can he know that he has arrived and she has come! After all, the orgasm is the "small death." The urge to destroy ourselves in orgasm is one of the fundamentals of living. Females are given the ability to destroy themselves much oftener than males. A good lover has learned this, and will have attained a semi-detachment that will enable him to "kill" his mate again and again, to their mutual joy, before he kills himself in one *coup de grâce*.

It is a curious fact that the long arm of coincidence had reached Veronica and me, for soon after we met I realized that I had seen her before. A little less than a year earlier I had had a serious infection in a finger of my left hand. In the course of treatment I made short visits to a physician nearby to have the finger dressed. On one such occasion, he had deigned to attend to me in the afternoon before his office hours began. I was the only patient at the time, but when I left his surgery to go out through the waiting room, I noticed immediately an unusually large female figure sitting facing me in an armchair. I looked full into her face, and she into mine. She was lovely! I was vaguely aware of another woman sitting in a chair next to her. But this apparition, thrust upon me so suddenly, left me no inclination to notice anyone else.

I was in a dilemma. I had an important apointment—but to hell with that. I waited in my car for her to come out; and she did emerge fairly soon with her companion, an older woman, possibly her mother. They started to walk; they had no car. I allowed time for them to get well under way; they were not likely to escape my surveillance.

I turned the car and followed them slowly, making stops at convenient points behind. After two very long blocks, they stopped and stood at a corner obviously waiting for a bus. What to do! God knows when a bus would come; God knows how far afield this would lead me; and there was the damnable business appointment that could not be delayed. So I abandoned the chase and returned to my job. And don't think I didn't regret it. I cursed myself afterward for all kinds of fool.

I consoled myself by telling myself that nothing could have come of it anyway. But I was wrong. Veronica and I compared notes later. She told me that if I had followed the bus, I'd have discovered that she parted from her mother and went her way alone. Had I approached her then and offered her a lift in my car, she would have gone with me—she was in that kind of mood at the time. Ah well, who's to know these things? And so it was that she almost became one of the "big ones that got away." But not quite.

Perhaps I have eulogized my Veronica's sexual virtuosity at too great length, yet there



are hardly words to describe, nor can I exaggerate her inexhaustible eroticism. I have read somewhere that only one per cent or less of all women are sexually receptive at all times. I am very happy that I have known at least one of the "one-percenters."

There is one incident that I feel impelled to describe even though it may seem "clinical"—partly because it was unique in my experience, and partly because it points up the sexuality of my Veronica. On this occasion we had just ensconced ourselves in a motel room, and by degrees divested ourselves of most of our clothing. I was seated in an armchair. Veronica stood in front of me, her back turned to me, arranging some detail of the bedclothes. To be thus confronted with the vast expanse of her hips and buttocks was more than flesh and blood could stand. I grabbed her fleshy flank with one hand, and with the other I plunged my hand and fingers into her vagina; I manipulated the perineal region, and thrust my fingers deep, deep into her sheath. She reacted characteristically—leaned forward to give greater play to my fingers; panted and heaved; twisted and pressed against the pressure of my hands and fingers; and then . . . and then she came, came in a blaze of glory. She spurted, literally spurted, in three or more successive streams an ejaculation of fluid that can only be compared to a male's ejaculation of semen. I never thought this possible. It has always been pointed out that the female does not ejaculate; that her orgasm is utterly unlike the man's; she has no seminal fluid or anything comparable to ejaculate. Nevertheless, it seems that the effluence of the Bartholin's glands can at times be so copious as to produce the phenomenon I describe.

I was amazed! My shorts were wet; my hands were dripping. Naturally this was terribly exciting to me, but I did not remark on it to Veronica until long afterward, and she confessed herself completely unaware of such an ejaculation. Orgasm, yes—but she had no notion of the flood of lubrication she had emitted.

Not so very long ago, Veronica had a very good job in a small town in a neighboring state. The job consisted of maintaining a small office above some stores along the main street. Here in a cubicle scarcely big enough for her to turn around in, she took telephone messages, made out orders, and typed letters for a very successful salesman who spent most of his time traveling about in a five-state area as the representative of a large corporation. The little office was his command post at which he'd check in by phone several times a day to report his whereabouts, receive messages, give messages to be relayed, and even dictate letters occasionally. It was quite a comfortable niche for Veronica; she was very well-paid. It was unfortunate that eventually the main office decided to close up the check-point as a matter of economy, but while it lasted it gave us frequent opportunities to meet in the privacy of the cubicle, where the only interruption would be the frequent ringing of the phone.

Constant use of the phone made Veronica's sexy voice familiar to a great many of her boss's customers and business associates, and he was often teased about his sexy secretary, and asked about the gal with the bedroom voice who worked for him. A number of predatory males among them tried to proposition her over the phone, and when she told them how fat and heavy she was, they wouldn't believe her. But for me, my fat darling's little office was a great convenience. True, with a desk and file cabinets and various other office accoutrements, there was not a great deal of room to maneuver in, yet we managed.

There was just about enough space to stretch out on the floor, and I provided some cotton blankets and a foam-rubber cushion that could easily be stowed out of sight in the back of a file or desk drawer. Starting out a little before noon, I would drive over, stop in the village to pick up hamburgers and coffee for lunch, and soon I'd be climbing the stairs to Veronica's cell.

What occasions those were! Why do they stand out in my mind above other, more comfortable, interludes we had? Is it because they were clandestine hours snatched from the middle of the day? Certainly there was little or no danger of discovery, for Robert, Veronica's boss, was always at some distant point. The only interruption we could expect was a parcel delivery, and Veronica could always call out, "Leave it outside the door," and the mailman would go away. Or was it because these close quarters enhanced and emphasized my darling's total bulk? How incredibly big she seemed in the confines of the cubicle!

What times we had! As far as Boss Robert was concerned, it mattered not at all. He was carrying on an extramarital affair of his own for which Veronica served as liaison—otherwise, I do not know whether he would have been tempted to make a pass at her or not. I do not know whether or not he was "one of us"—the aficionados of fat girls—but he was Jewish, and Jewish men are said to marry thin wives but want fat mistresses. In any event, he knew of me; I met him frequently and liked him. He would not have given us any trouble.

I have said that the most frequent interruption was the damned telephone, which seemed to ring constantly. It was an annoyance, yet at the same time almost comic. I took advantage of my fatling's preoccupation with the phone to lift her skirts and caress her with my hands and fingers, or play with her enormous breasts. Space would not permit her to move away from me even if she would, and many a time the person at the other end must have wondered why she seemed to pant, why she breathed so hard. How she managed to keep her mind on business while she was being sexually manipulated I shall never know, but she did. On one occasion, she was leaning, half lying, over the desk—the phone to her ear—when I lifted her skirts, pulled down her pants, and thrust my throbbing phallus into that broad behind where it would do the most good. I think that is the nearest I ever came to playing a practical joke on any of my amours.

And when we were on the floor, the telephone cord permitted the instrument to be placed within easy reach. How often it rang! How amazed some of those callers would have been to know that they were speaking to a girl in total copulation! Be it said to my credit that at such times I would be quietly, postpone

my activities until she was free to participate again. Good sense would dictate this, but oh, those sessions on the floor! How wonderful they were! How huge, how gloriously enormous she seemed in that small room!

A fat girl on a floor cannot get away from you, cannot sink into the resilience of a mattress as on a bed. Their total bulk is before you; you lie on it as if on a featherbed; the incredible softness of their flesh is to be compared to nothing else in this world. At the same time, you have the assurance that you are not hurting them: Fat girls have no bones sticking out to bruise them as your weight presses them to the floor; they are completely cushioned and seem impervious to your weight regardless of how heavy you are.

"Would you really like to get hard again?" How could Veronica ask! The expanse of exuberant soft white flesh, her heavenly broad buttocks, made such a question purely rhetorical. True, I'd worn myself out, but I craved another engagement with that prodigiously fat fanny.

Guiding my phallus to her face, she drew the foreskin back and started to suck me. This was my first experience of oral contact. Heretofore I had been reluctant to suggest such a thing even though I may have wished it. After she had revived me to satisfactory erection, I plunged once more between the sumptuous soft cheeks of her great fat ass and, somehow, again I was able to attain a complete and shattering orgasm. I would not have believed it possible, but for her gracious ministrations—mouth to penis resuscitation—I would not have been capable of a comeback.

I wish I could instill into all fat girls the assurance of their own superiority, the arrogance of the houri "Full-Moon," who *knows* that Allah has endowed her with attributes that make her superior to the skinny wenches, who glories in her fleshiness because it is in demand. But in our Western society, fleshiness is anathematized, downright obesity is stigmatized. However beautiful of face, no matter what qualities they have, fat girls are pariahs—almost literally untouchables. How I wish I could take them all into my arms and tell them how lovely they are! My heart bleeds when I read in the press: "Colleges Shunning Fat Students." When did fat ever have anything to do with brains? Yet this article points out that there is definite discrimination against the fat. One investigator is quoted, "I think this is what happens. An admissions officer looks at an obese girl applying to the college during an interview and says to herself, 'This girl just won't fit in at Wellesley.'" What is wrong with a society that cannot accept individuals of different physical structure? How can we hope for an integration of colors if we won't even integrate the fat?

I am reminded that a couple of years ago I spent an evening at a charity ball of one sort or another. I left the festivities very late—about four o'clock in the morning. Everyone of our party was hungry, but we found everything closed except the local diner. We had something to eat, and I rose from the booth before the others to pay the check at the cashier's. Almost simultaneously, a group of teenagers came in, among them a very cute fat girl, and she *was* fat. I was more or less inebriated, and I said to her, "Girl—in my book, you are *beautiful*. If there's anything I despise it's a skinny woman." I wouldn't have had the courage to say it if I'd been sober—there's the pity of it—and I remember her reply. She looked at me with a big smile and said, "You're *very* nice." I felt good about that. I felt I had helped this girl to a better opinion of herself; helped her to realize that the whole world was not against her. What futility I suffer! If only I could do as much—to inflate the egos of all fat girls to the dimensions of their corpulent bodies. I did not want to go to bed with that teenage girl—not that I would have hesitated if the opportunity had presented itself—but I wanted to make her feel that she was a *person*, admirable, with sex appeal for someone, that she was not a pariah. I hope I helped her.

And then I have this clipping: "Reducing Could Mean Disaster, Doctor Warns." To go on: "Are you overweight? Not just a little bulgy around the middle, but a real butterball? And do you hanker to make a sylph of yourself? The mental and emotional price you may pay for the transformation may turn out to be more than you are willing to pay, warns a Chicago psychiatrist, Dr. Howard D. Kurland." (I am gaining a great respect for Chicago psychiatrists!) He goes on to elaborate on the *advantages* of being fat.

No doubt these reminiscences have been drawn out overlong. In what I have written there is one hope above all others: That any fat girl who happens to read this will be elated at the picture I have tried to paint—in all honesty and sincerity—of her and her sisters; that she will be happier, more content, because she has learned that she can be wanted and appreciated.

In closing I cannot help but include a wonderful excerpt from the *Arabian Nights*, translated from the Arabic by Ruth Sloan, who once gave me permission to use it as I saw fit. This particular gem comes from "Six Houris of Differing Shapes and Sizes"—the fat one is telling the others why she thinks she is the fairest of them all:

**The plump and slender rivals rose from their places. They faced each other and Full-Moon made ready for the onslaught.**

**She proceeded to unclothe, baring her wrists, ankles and arms, and thighs, denuding herself almost entirely—the better to show her opulent belly with its overlapping folds, the shadowed roundness of her navel, the sumptuousness of her buttocks—until only one garment remained, a gossamer chemise which agreeably veiled these rounded forms. She faced her rival, the slender Houri-of-Paradise, and said:**

**"Praised be to Allah who made me stout and stuffed cushions in my every nook and corner; neither did He neglect to lard my skin with fat that is fragrant as the spicebush.**

**"Now, skinny one, know that the sages have said, 'The joy and sensuality of living consists of three things: to partake of flesh, to mount upon flesh, and to make flesh enter flesh.'**

**"Allah himself, in the Book, commends fat when he commands fat sheep, fat lambs, fat heifers for sacrifice.**

**"Does anyone ask the butcher for meat that's skin and bone? And does not the butcher reserve for his best patrons the fleshiest morsels?**

**"Listen, skinny one, to what the poet says of the woman, fat like myself: 'Look, as she rises, how she leaves a souvenir of herself on the place she has quitted, the imprint of her buttocks.**

**"'Look at her hips as she walks. They are unbearably lascivious. They are like two otters playing seesaw.**

**"'Look at her as she dances. With a thrust of her hips she makes faint our hearts which swoon at her feet.'**

**"As for you, skin and bones, what do you resemble but a plucked sparrow? Your legs, do they in any way differ from those of a crow? Your thighs, are they not sticks to poke the fire? Your body, is it not hard and dry as a stake? Emaciated female, is it not of you the poet speaks when he says:**

**"'Allah preserve me from coupling with this skinny woman! Her every limb is a horn which rams my body, so that I waken all battered and bruised.'"**

What more could anyone say? But now comes news of a 420-pound go-go girl performing at a night spot in downtown Cincinnati. I'm on my way!

# ARE YOU AVANT-GARDE? ...OR DERRIERE? WHICHEVER, WE THINK YOU'LL LIKE OUR OFFER, SO PLEASE DROP YOUR GARDE AND READ ON

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**Nudes of Yesteryear** is no ordinary artbook; it is the quintessence of over 100 years of classic nude figure photography. It will undoubtedly stand as one of history's most towering tributes to the beauty of the female form.

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**The Editors**

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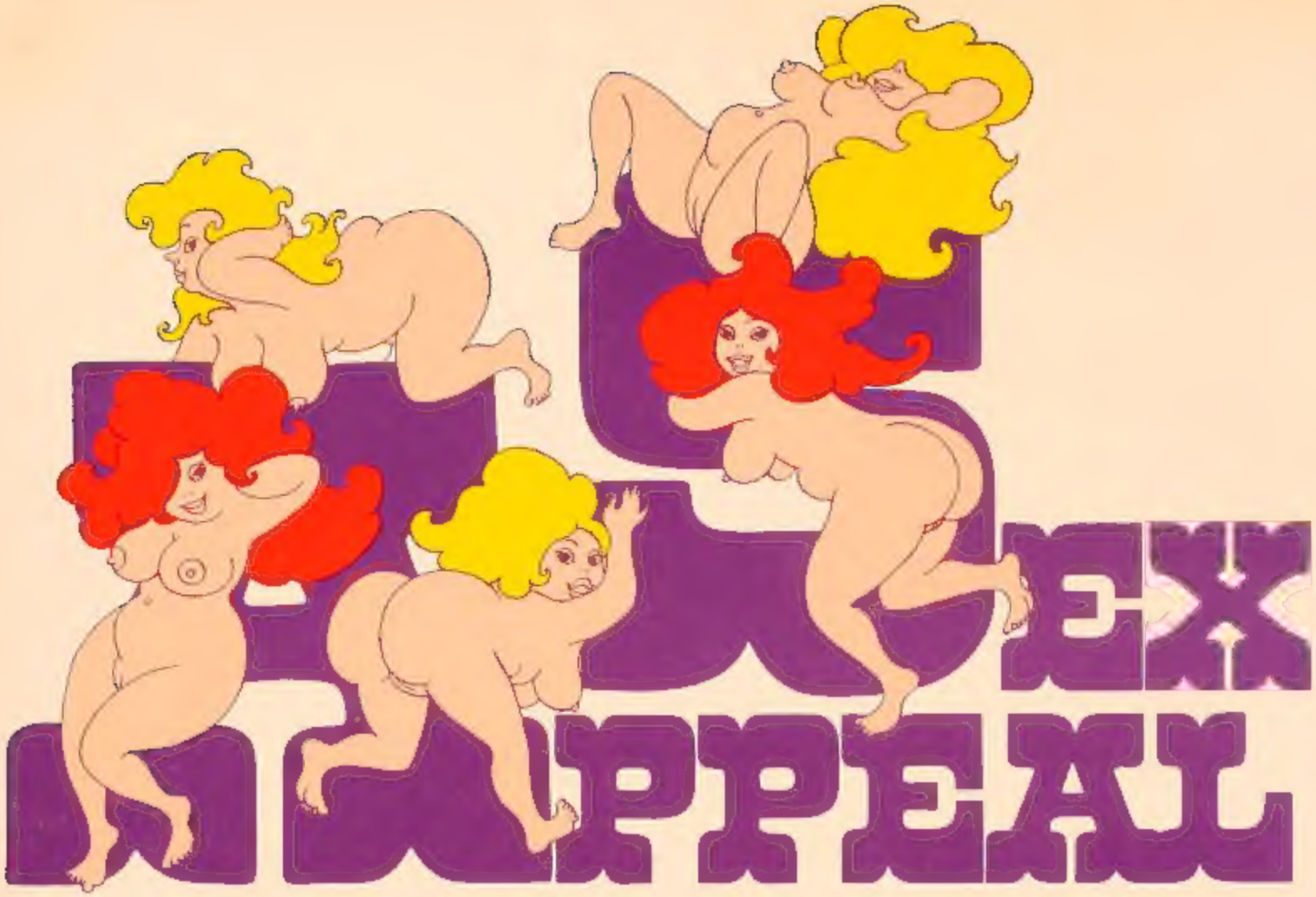


The editors of Avant-Garde do hereby issue an appeal to readers of this magazine to submit to them, for publication, manuscripts describing their most memorable sexual adventures. The object is to create a series of narratives to be published under the title "The Lust Battalion: Sexual Adventures of the Avant-Garde."

The first installment of this Space-Age Decameron begins on page 41 of this issue. This installment happens to be a long one. The story you send us need not be as long. In fact, it can be as short as a single page.

There are no rules concerning prose form. You may wish to pour the new wine of your experience into the shapely old bottle of the true-life erotic form, as exemplified by Frank Harris, or you may, like Henry Miller, adopt a style that is intensely personal. If you like, you may simply describe your experience in the form of a letter. The important thing is that the experience described *must be true*. It may be licit or illicit, normal or "perverse," ecstatic or embarrassing—*just so long as it really happened*. (Names may be changed—to protect the guilty.)

Send all manuscripts to: "The Lust Battalion," Avant-Garde, 110 W. 40th St., New York, N.Y. 10018. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must accompany your manuscript if you wish to have it returned. Avant-Garde assumes no responsibility for loss of manuscripts, so please be sure to keep a carbon copy. Manuscripts accepted for publication will be paid for at Avant-Garde's standard rates.

So come on all you unsung Tom Joneses and Lady Chatterleys, respond to our sex appeal. Remember, a pleasure shared is a pleasure doubled.

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